GUIDE

TO

BLENHEIM.

Entered at Stationers Hall, according to Act of Parliament.

Frontispiece.

North or Grand Front of Blenheim in Oxfordshire.

K Mason (W.H.)

NEW DESCRIPTION

OF

BLENHEIM,

THE SEAT OF

HIS GRACE

THE

DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

Containing a full and accurate Account

OF THE

PAINTINGS, TAPESTRY, AND FURNITURE;

A PICTURESQUE TOUR OF THE GARDENS AND PARK;

And a general Deſcription of the CHINA GALLERY, &c.

WITH A

PRELIMINARY ESSAY ON LANDSCAPE GARDENING.

——————not the vale
Of TEMPE, fam'd in ſong, nor IDA'S grove
Such beauty boaſts. LORD LYTTELTON'S Blenheim.

Qui fait aimer les champs, fait aimer la vertu. DE LILLE.

THE FOURTH EDITION, ENLARGED.

Embelliſhed with an elegant PLAN of the PARK, &c.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR CADELL AND DAVIES, IN THE STRAND;
AND E. NEWBERY, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD;
AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

1797.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

THEIR GRACES,

The Duke and Ducheſs of Marlborough,

THIS PERFORMANCE

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED;

AS AN HUMBLE TESTIMONY OF PROFOUND

VENERATION

FOR WHATEVER IS AMIABLE IN PRIVATE LIFE,

OR CAPABLE OF REFLECTING REAL LUSTRE

ON EXALTED RANK;

BY THEIR GRACES

MOST DEVOTED, AND

MOST OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,

WILLIAM MAVOR.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO A FORMER EDITION.

NO publications are more entertaining or uſeful than local delineations and deſcriptions, drawn with fidelity and taſte: they enable perſons to form a juſt idea of remarkable places to which fortune or ſituation denies them acceſs; and without ſuch aids occaſional ſpectators, who have not leiſure to trace every beauty for themſelves, muſt inevitably loſe half the pleaſure and ſatisfaction to be derived from their EXCURSIONS. Few places poſſeſs more attractions than BLENHEIM; and yet few places have received leſs juſtice from the POET or HISTORIAN.—— WHEATLEY and GILPIN, who had every requiſite qualification to do it juſtice, have only mentioned it in a curſory manner; and LORD LYTTELTON lived too near the æra of the firſt Duke of MARLBOROUGH's exploits to

deſcribe the place farther than might ſerve as a vehicle for the praiſe of the HERO. The preſent work is reſpectfully offered as an attempt at more appropriate delineation; and the Author is happy to find, that the public has ſhewn it that favourable and candid attention, which, in every caſe, ought ultimately to be the reward of him, who, by honeſt arts, aſpires to it's unbiaſſed patronage and protection.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

THE demand for this little work has been regularly increaſing, ſince its firſt publication in 1787; a pleaſing proof to the Author, that it is not deſtitute of utility to the viſitors of Blenheim.

Animated by this encouragement and approbation, he has reviſed the whole with diligent attention, and made ſuch additions and alterations as circumſtances ſeemed to require.

He has been the more anxious to do this, becauſe Blenheim has lately attracted the particular notice both of the poet and the critic, and becauſe it is probable, that this will be the laſt edition which can receive any improvement from his hands.

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GENERAL INFORMATION.

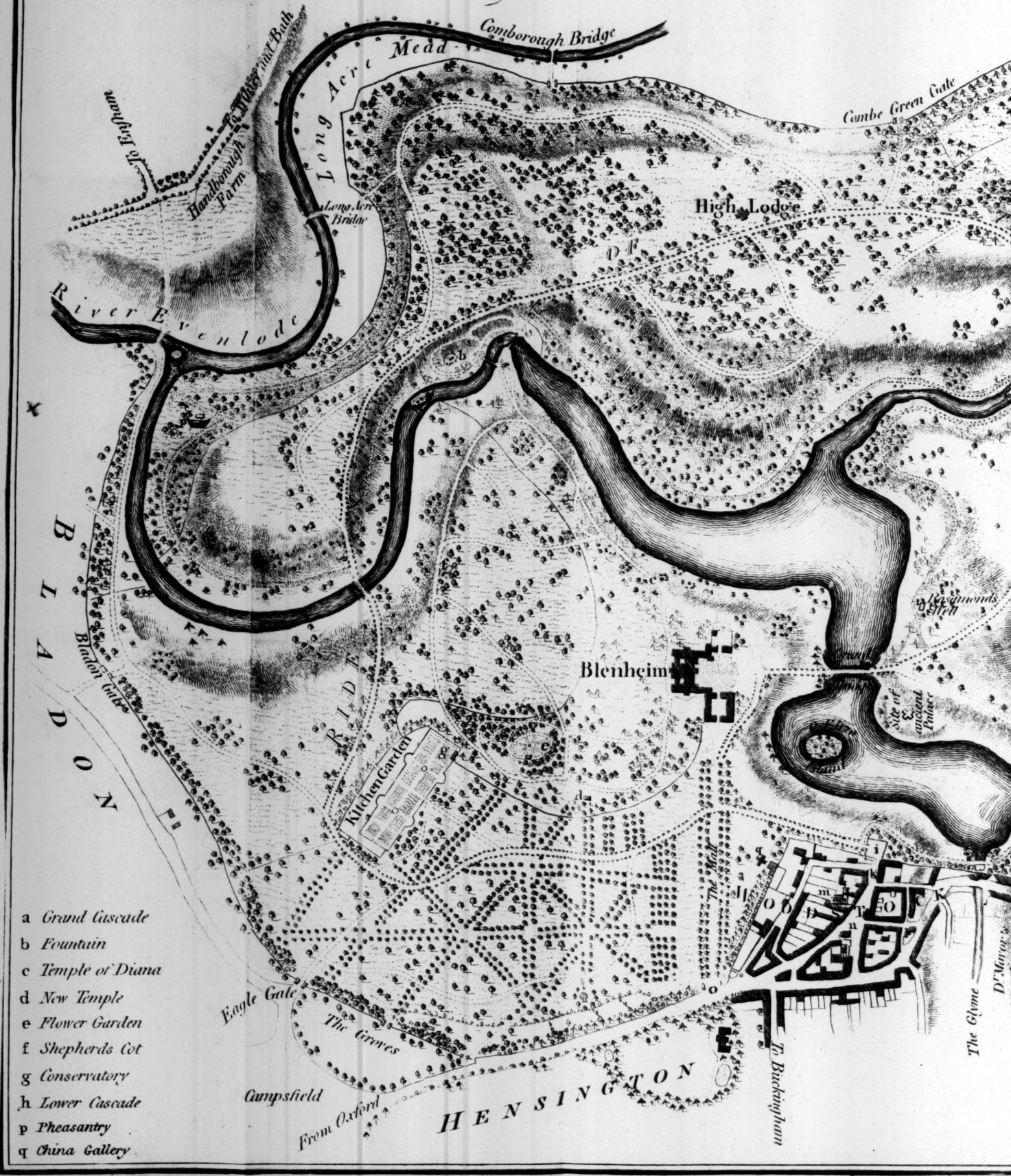
BLENHEIM may be ſeen every afternoon from three to five o'clock, except on Sundays and public days.

COMPANY who arrive in the morning may take the ride of the Park before dinner, and after that, viſit the Palace, &c.

The CHINA GALLERY, PARK, and GARDENS, will, on proper application, be ſhewn at any hour of the day, except during the time of Divine Service on Sunday.

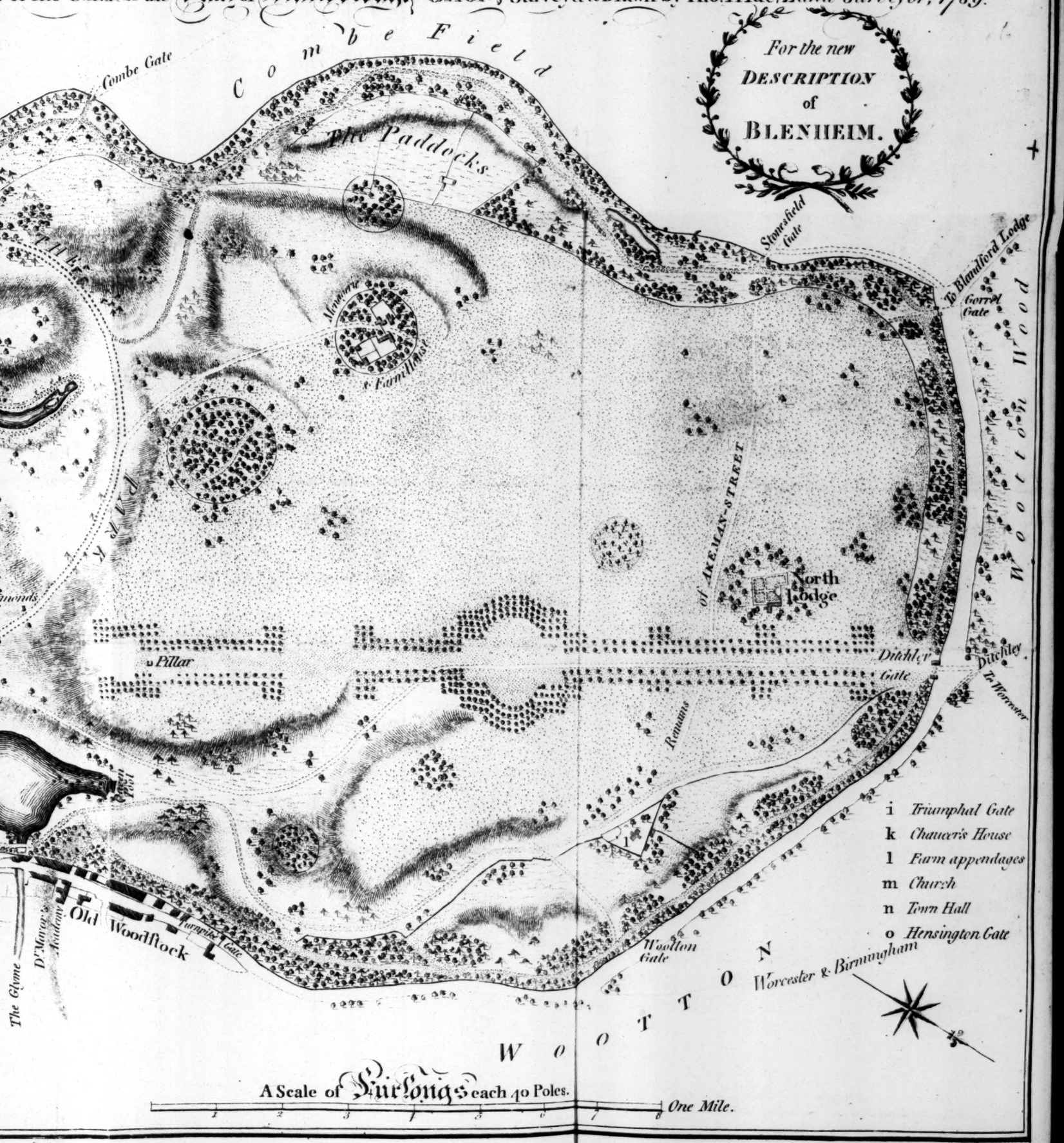
*** A few plans of BLENHEIM PARK on grand Eagle French Paper, plain or coloured, for framing, may be had where the DESCRIPTION is ſold.

A PLAN of Blenheim Palace, GARDENS, PARK, PLANTATIONS, &c the SEAT of Hi



Published Jan.y 2.d 1797. by T. Cadell Strand.

# of His GRACE the Duke of Marlborough OXON, Survey'd & Drawn by Thos. Pride, Land-Surveyor, 1789.



PRELIMINARY ESSAY
ON
LANDSCAPE GARDENING.

NATURAL Taſte is the foundation of all pictureſque embelliſhment. To ſeize the grand outline with the mind's eye, to adapt the deſign to the predominant features in the landſcape, to unfold the beauties of nature by the maſterly touches of art, is the ſublime province of the ornamental compoſer of rural ſcenery.

That this ſcience has been cultivated with the greateſt ſucceſs in this country, even jealouſy and national vanity will not pretend to deny. Foreign writers, diſtinguiſhed for their taſte, have allowed the Engliſh the pre-eminence in landſcape and ornamental gardening, and that they

were the firſt who emancipated themſelves from the trammels of prejudice; and recurring to nature, which had long been baniſhed from the ſeats of the great, invited her to her deſerted abodes, and gave her a new and impoſing aſpect.

KENT ſaw the incongruity of artificial deſign. The ſtraight walk, the clipped hedge, the tortured yew, ſunk beneath the ſuperior chaſtity of his taſte. He made as much progreſs as an innovator, who had a prevailing bad taſte to contend with, could be expected to do. Perhaps his own was not quite correct. One age ſeldom unfolds an idea, and brings that idea to perfection. We have had ſchools of painting as well as of ornamental ſcenery. Some maſters were diſtinguiſhed for one excellence, and ſome for another. The force of genius has at intervals prevailed over diſadvantages; and produced works to be admired, though not in every reſpect deſerving imitation. Reynolds, with a mind enlightened by ſtudy, and chaſtiſed by taſte, embodied the form, and caught the character

racter which he transfuſed into the colouring on the canvas. He grouped — he combined. He followed nature, and therefore ſucceeded; but he had great artiſts among his predeceſſors, who paved the way for the attainment of excellence.

It was not thus with pictureſque embelliſhment. The ſcience was comparatively new; and where attempts had been made, they were in general conducted on a wrong plan, or proceeded from a vitiated taſte.

Kent had every obſtacle in his way; yet he accompliſhed much; and gratitude is due to him who deviates from a wrong path, and aſpires to perfection, though he may not reach her temple.

To Kent ſucceeded BROWN — a man originally bred a gardener; and from this fortuitous circumſtance, without a particle of his genius, every perſon who can ſuperintend a kitchen-garden, or handle a ſpade, has thought himſelf qualified to quit his ſphere, and attempt deſign. But Brown poſſeſſed an originality of con-

ception, a poet's eye, and an inſtinctive taſte for rural embelliſhment. He was at laſt animated and inſpired by ſome of his own creations.

He ſaw the deformity of perverted beauty with keener optics than Kent—he viewed nature with the enthuſiaſm of a lover; and though it cannot be denied, that he ſometimes tricked her out in meretricious ornaments, and patched her with unmeaning clumps, he never loſt ſight of her prominent charms, and his worſt errors are only like minute pimples on a beautiful face *.

We have, however, ſeen this mighty maſter of pictureſque embelliſhment ſeverely cenſured by ſome of his own countrymen, who, indulging too much in the viſions of theory, have denied him the merit of practical excellence. Becauſe Brown could execute better than he could deſcribe, and worked by ſelf-taught rules, he has been attacked with

* Brown, as an ingenious critic obſerves, made it his maxim to follow and to copy Nature; whom, if he did not always repreſent in the images he ſet up to her honour, he at leaſt cauſed to be admired and adored.

aſperity;

aſperity; and ſome of his moſt capital performances have been aſcribed to chance, or to a dereliction of his own principles.

But who can reduce the infinite variety of ſituations that are to be improved to any ſyſtematic principles! The powerful genius of a place will imperiouſly ſet rules at defiance; and, in fact, art can only be the handmaid of nature, whoſe beauties, preſenting a boundleſs variety, are alike indignant of confinement and controul.

The attempt at ſyſtem is only an effort to bring us back to what has juſtly been exploded. "I have no magical ſkill in planting roſes," ſays Gray. Nature diſdains the fetters of art. The beſt principles can never be univerſally applicable to all ſituations in an equal degree. The painter may invent or reject at pleaſure, and adhere to the rules of his art: the embelliſher of landſcape is more confined in his operations; he cannot always reject—he can only improve. His invention may cover ſome defects; but it cannot always command the excellencies he

might wiſh. Beſides, a flat ſurface and an extended plane are very different materials to work on, and will have very different effects when viewed by the eye of natural taſte *, the only juſt criterion of rural embelliſhment.

The chef d'œuvre of Brown was the improvements at Blenheim. He had the nobleſt field to diſplay his talents on, and he did not labour in vain. But though he traced the outline with effect, the correct taſte of the noble poſſeſſor of this magnificent place has enabled him to give it additional touches, and to improve its drapery. He has preſerved the unity of the deſign, and only heightened the colouring. Who that now viſits theſe pictureſque ſcenes can deny, but that plantations have been applied to all the principal purpoſes which M. De Girardin, perhaps copying from his

* By natural taſte is meant that quick perception of the beauties and deformities of nature, which enables a perſon at once to decide. No faculty is more rare. It requires the union of a poetic imagination with a correct judgment.

beloved

beloved Ermenonville, conceives ought to be their grand objects:

"To form the perſpective or ſide ſcenes of the foreground that may beſt connect the diſtances with the principal points of view.

"To raiſe ſuch elevations or ſcenes, as may give relief even to an abſolute flat.

"To hide all diſagreeable objects.

"To give more extent to thoſe that are pleaſing, by concealing their terminations behind a maſs of wood; by which means the imagination continues them beyond the point where they are ſeen.

"To give an agreeable outline to all ſurfaces, whether of land or water."

Theſe are the ideas of a maſter; and we here ſee them realized. They who think juſtly, in matters not under the influence of paſſion, will generally think the ſame: hence often coincidence without intention.

But while Brown has been too indiſcriminately condemned, he has alſo been too laviſhly praiſed, where he is leaſt de-

ſenſible. His clumps muſt in many caſes be given up by his moſt zealous partizans, or receive a degree of connection by intermediate planting, as has been done at Blenheim, to preſerve the uniformity of the ſcene. His unvarying circular belts too, where they are not broken into maſſes, as we ſee them here, and when they ſerve to exclude the proſpect of the ſurrounding country, are real defects in pictureſque beauty. No kind of property is leſs the object of envy, or more grateful to the eye, than to take poſſeſſion of a country in an extenſive view: it contributes to the general beauty, and is equally enjoyed by all, without offence to any. That diſplay of nature is certainly moſt magnificent, which is bounded only by the horizon: where ſcenes under the immediate view preſent the moſt captivating charms, and where diſtance harmonizes with the fore ground.

Such is the prevailing character of Blenheim. But let us not degrade it to a mere object to pleaſe the eye of taſte, however refined. It preſents views to intereſt

tereſt the heart. To the pictureſque landſcape which pleaſes the ſight, it adds the moral landſcape that delights the mind. In its wide extent, it exhibits accommodations for age, remunerated for it's ſervices in youth—It is peopled with happy labourers—it is ſtocked with cattle—it waves with corn *. Theſe not only enliven its moſt brilliant ſcenes, but give them a charm to the heart of ſenſibility, which no inanimate or uſeleſs embelliſhments can convey.

* SONNET, on ſeeing ſome hundred additional acres in Blenheim Park converted into tillage.

Oft o'er this ſcene, with raptur'd eye, the Muſe
Has ſtray'd, while fancy's magic glaſs
In fairy tints has painted ancient views,
And ſhewn in long array Fame's fav'rites paſs:
Th' illuſtrious line of names renown'd of old,
Imagination wakes—and ſtartles to behold.—
Here RURAL BEAUTY fix'd her priſtine reign,
And lur'd the Monarch to her native ſeat;
Here ev'ry ſpot,—the ſhade, the ſlope, the plain,
Is ſacred ground, and worn by hallow'd feet.
And ſhall brown CERES o'er the ſpace preſide,
Where Kings have ponder'd, and a CHAUCER ſung?
Yes, goddeſs, come! with thee the gifts abide,
That prop the pomp of State, that tune the poet's tongue.

1795.

NEW DESCRIPTION
OF
BLENHEIM.

THE Palace or Caſtle of BLENHEIM, one of the moſt magnificent piles of architecture in this kingdom, and perhaps in the whole world, ſtands in the fineſt part of one of the fineſt counties in England, within half a mile of the borough of New Woodſtock; diſtant about eight miles from the Univerſity of Oxford, and ſixty-three from London. The ſurrounding country is fertile and irriguous, adorned with woods, and abounding with ſeats of the nobility and gentry; the air is pure, mild, and ſalubrious; and all the neceſſaries and many of the elegancies of life are plentiful and choice.

BLENHEIM

BLENHEIM was built at the public expence, in the reign of Queen ANNE, by whom, with the concurrence of Parliament, which voted half a million for its completion, it was conferred, together with the annexed demeſnes, on the moſt illuſtrious JOHN DUKE of MARLBOROUGH, as a teſtimony of royal favour and national gratitude for his tranſcendent ſervices, and the many ſignal victories he had gained over the French and Bavarians, particularly that near the village of Blenheim, on the banks of the Danube, from which this noble palace receives its name. This victory being atchieved on the ſecond day of Auguſt, 1704, it was enacted, "That on the ſame day of every year for ever, the inheritors of his Grace's honours and titles ſhould render at WINDSOR to her Majeſty, her heirs and ſucceſſors, one ſtandard or colours, with three fleurs-de-lis painted thereon, as an acquittance for all manner of rents, ſuits, and ſervices, due to the Crown."

The architect of Blenheim was SIR JOHN VANBRUGH, who, though he has been

been blamed with ſome ſhew of reaſon for the heavineſs of his general deſigns, muſt at leaſt ſtand acquitted in this inſtance, when it is conſidered that ſtrength and durability were principal objects to be regarded, in a pile intended to remain a monument of Britiſh valour and Britiſh generoſity, till the lateſt periods of time—

> Till time's remoteſt ſtage deſign'd to prove
> A CHURCHILL's valour, and a Nation's love *.

Accordingly we find both the plan and the execution excellently adapted to anſwer thoſe momentous purpoſes; and while the more modern and ſhewy fabrics are only the boaſt of an age, Blenheim ſeems calculated to ſtand ininjured by the lapſe of years, and to excite the admiration of foreigners as well as natives, in proportion as it is better known.

But Vanbrugh does not ſtand in need of the poor compliment of an apology for his deſign,—he deſerves very conſi-

* The verſes interſperſed, where not otherwiſe acknowledged, are generally taken from BLENHEIM, a Poem, by the author of this Deſcription, firſt publiſhed in 1787.

derable

derable applauſe for his judgment in a circumſtance which has principally expoſed him to the cenſure of pretended critics: he has rendered this ſtructure characteriſtic and expreſſive of its deſtination. Its maſſy grandeur, its ſpacious portals, and its lofty towers, recal the ideas of defence and ſecurity; with theſe we naturally aſſociate the hero for whom it was erected, and thus find it emblematic of his talents and purſuits *.

From Woodſtock, the uſual approach, we enter the park through a triumphal arch, or ſpacious portal of the Corinthian order, raiſed to the memory of John Duke of Marlborough, by Sarah his Ducheſs; and charged with the fol-

* When this Deſcription was firſt publiſhed, the ſtrictures on Vanbrugh's Architecture had been ſo long and ſo often repeated by unreflecting prejudice, that the Author was fearful to beſtow even an adequate eulogium on this noble pile. He has not the vanity to think that he has been able to give a turn to the public opinion in this reſpect; but he certainly has the pleaſure to find, that ſeveral writers of indiſputable taſte, ſince that period, have ſtepped forward in vindication of his general ſentiments, and have even far exceeded his moderate commendation. But the age of Blenheim is verging towards a century; and the reign of error or of prejudice is ſeldom of longer duration.

lowing

lowing inſcription, on the ſide next Woodſtock:

Porta haec extrvcta eſt anno poſt obitvm illvſtriſſimi
Johannis Dvcis de Marlborovgh jvſſv atqve avſpiciis
Sarae conjvgis dilectiſſimae cvi teſtamento commendavit
opera
Qvibvs vltimam ipſe manvm non impoſverat.
Qvanta fverint dvcis in rempvblicam merita ingreſſo tibi
Plvribvs dicet colvmna qvam optimae conjvgis pietas
poni volvit
Vt perenne eſſet ipſivs gloriae ſvaeque dilectionis
monvmentvm.
A. D. MDCCXXIII.

Towards the park is the ſubſequent tranſlation:

This gate was bvilt the year after the death of the moſt
illuſtrious
John Dvke of Marlborovgh by order of Sarah his moſt
beloved wife
To whom he left the ſole direction of the many things
That remained vnfiniſhed of this fabrick.
The ſervices of this great man to his covntry the pillar
Will tell yov which the Dvcheſs has erected for a laſting
Monvment of his glory and her affection to him.
MDCCXXIII.

On entering the park, one of the moſt enchanting proſpects in nature diſcloſes itſelf to our view. The PALACE appears in front, the towers of which riſe into the horizon; on the left, part of the borough of WOODSTOCK; on the right, a broad

broad and deep valley, through which flows a river of equal extent, with bold and winding ſhores, at a proportionate diſtance interſected, but viſibly not terminated by a BRIDGE of correſponding magnificence to the grandeur of the ſcene;—a ſwelling lawn, crowned with a ſuperb and lofty COLUMN, which leaves the talleſt trees that ſeem crowding round its baſe at an immenſe diſtance below, while light clumps, ſhady groves, and plantations of different ſhapes and hues ſkirt the bounding dales, or clothe the remoter ſlopes; — a ſecond reach of water beyond the bridge, fringed by deep woods that riſe to the very ſummit of the oppoſite hill, and compoſe a variouſly tinted and indented ſurface of luxuriant foliage; all theſe form an aſſemblage of attractions unrivalled, and conſpire to ſtrike the eye of taſte with an irreſiſtible charm. In this ſingularly pictureſque landſcape, the beautiful and the ſublime are moſt intimately combined: all that can pleaſe, elevate, or aſtoniſh, diſplay themſelves at once; and the mind is at

a loſs

a loſs to know to what ſource it is chiefly indebted for its pleaſure, or rather what is the predominant character of the objects that arreſt its attention.

At a ſmall diſtance from this portal, towards the right, is the *Centrum Phonicum*, or ſpeaker's place, of a very remarkable polyſyllabical articulate ECHO; which, according to Dr. Plott, in his Natural Hiſtory of Oxfordſhire, will diſtinctly repeat ſeventeen ſyllables in a calm day, and in the night twenty: but the demolition of the ancient palace, which ſtood on the brow of the oppoſite hill, the extenſion of the river, or ſome other latent cauſe, has in ſome meaſure diminiſhed its ſurpriſing powers. However, a very ſuperior ECHO may be heard by a ſpeaker ſtationed near an old cedar tree, between ROSAMOND's Well and the bridge; and it is nothing unuſual for thoſe who are acquainted with this circumſtance to compliment the vocal nymph with a familiar ſalutation, which is ſpeedily returned with amazing exactneſs

of articulation, and reiterated according to the ſtillneſs of the ſurrounding ſcene. Muſical ſounds have a delightful effect on this ſpot.

A broad gravel-road, preſerving one uniform direction for a quarter of a mile, and gradually diverging from the ſweep of the river, conducts us towards the eaſtern gate of the Palace. This road is almoſt wholly open. On the Woodſtock ſide, only a few ſmall freſh-planted clumps appear, which aſſiſt to conceal the boundary from other points of view, and to break the line of ſome private houſes; a few trees, fancifully diſpoſed, ſkirt the ſlope, and others of a larger growth range with the ſtream on its very edge, and afford ſome pretty glades into the water between their trunks and boughs; but their heads ſcarcely riſing above the level of the walk, they ſerve rather to vary than to conceal. Near the Home Lodge, on the left, the New Walk commences: it extends about a quarter of a mile under the park wall,

amidſt

amidſt the covert of plantations, which afford ſhelter from the winds, and ſhade from the heat.

As we advance, the proſpects diverſify, the fine rural ſcenes in the northern part of the park become more and more conſpicuous; and to the north-weſt, the eye takes in an ample field of cheerful objects over a wide extent of champaign and woodland country, to the extremity of WHICHWOOD Foreſt, which is finely contraſted with the deep umbrage that overhangs the lake, and intercepts the view. This road, which is only lateral and circuitous, to avoid the ſtiffneſs of a direct approach, at laſt falls into another, which beginning at the noble entrance on the ſouth of Woodſtock, is lined by double rows of ſtately trees, and forms a beautiful and ſpacious viſta to the Palace.

By the eaſtern gate we enter an arcaded quadrangle; on the right, conſiſting of offices; on the left, chiefly occupied by the THEATRE, which has been recently fitted up in a ſtyle of peculiar

elegance, and with appendages correſpondent to the munificence and fortune of the owner. The ſtage is large, and is furniſhed with proper changes of ſcenery, and fixtures: the ſeats for the audience are eaſy and commodious, and capable of accommodating two hundred perſons, without including the ſide boxes. The whole has a grand and a pleaſing effect. For an amuſement at once liberal, elegant, and inſtructive, which admits ſo many to a participation, and which leaves no ſting behind, the expence conſpicuous here cannot be deemed too profuſe, nor can that generoſity and taſte be ſufficiently praiſed that have appropriated and applied it ſo well.

From this quadrangle, we proceed into the area, where the NORTH FRONT opens to the view; a noble piece of architecture, three hundred and forty-eight feet from wing to wing, and highly ornamented, particularly in the centre.

This is the grand approach; and to it we are properly conducted over the valley, through which the river winds,

by

by a magnificent bridge, which has been frequently compared to the RIALTO at Venice, though without any parallel of application. The diameter of its centre arch is an hundred and one feet:

> Thro' which the Danube might collected pour
> His ſpacious urn.

The effect of this bridge, which unites two hills, and gives an uniformity and conſiſtency to the ſcene, that would otherwiſe be disjointed and complex, is peculiarly grand; and its application one of the happieſt efforts of judgment. Beyond it, on a conſiderable eminence, in the midſt of a fine lawn, is a ſtately column or pillar, one hundred and thirty feet high, on the top of which ſtands a ſtatue of the immortal John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough,

> ——Like a guardian God ſublime,
> And awes the ſubject plain.

Every circumſtance that enters into the compoſition of the ſcene unites to promote one vaſt and beautiful effect. The north front itſelf is of ſuch magnificence as to diffuſe a luſtre on ſurrounding ob-

jects; the accompaniments are well adapted to reflect it back on the building. A fine expanſe of water ſtretches its arms around, as if proud to embrace it, approaches in a variety of directions, ſpreads its animating ſpirit over the whole, and connects together the widely extended, and extremely diverſified parts of the brilliant landſcape.

The SOUTH FRONT, though leſs extenſive, is highly elegant. It commands a calm ſcene, a view that, without ſurpriſing, no repetition can render indifferent; the eye reſts on it with complacency, and returns to it with delight. The fore-ground is a fine lawn, frequently covered with ſheep, and enlivened with pheaſants, ſo tame as to follow their feeder; the pleaſure grounds ſucceed; behind is a beautiful perſpective of the village of BLADON, juſt peeping through tufted trees; and ſtill farther, a proſpect of the diſtant hills, which breaking one before another exhibit a ſucceſſion of chains, till the laſt, a continuation of the CHILTERN Range through Berks,

Berks, gradually diſſolves in the almoſt boundleſs horizon on the ſouth-weſt. Over the portico, which does credit to the Corinthian order, ſtands a coloſſal buſt of LOUIS XIV. of France, taken from the gates of Tournay.

A glorious trophy to the Victor's fame,—
A laſting record of the GALLIC ſhame.

It is adorned with proper military emblems, and under it is the ſubſequent inſcription, running along the pediment:

Europæ hæc vindex genio decora alta Britanno *.

Which may be rendered, "*The aſſerter of the liberty of Europe dedicates theſe lofty honours to the Britiſh Genius.*"

Near the eaſtern angle, a commodious and elegant OBSERVATORY has been

* Though this inſcription has but one obvious, and can have but one conſiſtent meaning, it has nevertheleſs been tortured into various; and the ſentence without a verb has been the alternate ſtumbling-block of real ignorance and falſe criticiſm: no authorities can avail the former; the latter may be convinced of its propriety, by referring to

ÆNEAS HÆC DE DANAIS VICTORIBUS ARMA.
ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΙ ΑΠΟ ΜΗΔΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ.

And to other inſtances of a ſimilar mode of expreſſion, from ſources of unqueſtionable purity.

lately erected, amply furniſhed with the beſt aſtronomical apparatus, by the juſtly celebrated Ramſden. A grand teleſcope, by Herſchell, preſented to the Duke by his Majeſty ſoon after the royal viſit to Blenheim in 1786, and now in the library, may be reckoned a very valuable appendage: another correſponding Obſervatory is now fitted up, at the weſtern angle.

The apartments of this Palace are furniſhed with princely magnificence: the tapeſtry and paintings attract univerſal and deſerved attention; but as it is impoſſible to do them adequate juſtice in any general deſcription, we ſhall conduct our readers through the grand ſuit of rooms, uſually open to public inſpection, in the order in which they are ſhewn, and enumerate the moſt celebrated productions of art in each.

Here PAINTING ſhews the wonders of her art,
Gains on the ſenſe, and captivates the heart;
From mimic pencils new creations riſe,
Start into life, and wear its native dyes;
Bold as the form PROMETHEUS taught to move,
When Heaven's dread lightning he withdrew from JOVE.

Here

Here BRUSSELS' looms their boaſted ſkill diſplay,
And tapeſtry armies ſtand in long array.
The vivid tints with war's dread horrors burn:
Here, Grief and Shame—there, Rage and Fury turn;
The lengthen'd march—the ramparts riſe to fight,
And all the kindling glories of the fight.

Hail, ye great artiſts, whoſe enchanting ſkill
Can mould the paſſions, and controul the will:
Not to the eye your labours are addreſt,—
They boaſt an influence o'er the ductile breaſt;
For while, entranc'd, each happy touch we view,
The moral ſenſe becomes reform'd by you:
Beauty and order, harmony and eaſe,
Unite to poliſh, as they tend to pleaſe.

HALL.

Through a ſuperb portico, on maſſy Corinthian columns of elegance and dimenſions almoſt unrivalled, we enter the hall, which lies in the centre of the north, or grand front: this is alſo ſupported by fluted Corinthian pillars. The ceiling, which is the height of the building, is painted by Sir James Thornhill, and allegorically repreſents VICTORY crowning JOHN Duke of MARLBOROUGH, as ſhe points to a plan of the battle of BLENHEIM. The Duke is depicted

picted in a blue Roman dreſs. Over the noble marble door-caſe that communicates with the ſaloon, is a buſt of the ſame hero, with this inſcription:

Ecce virum ſtabiles cui gens auguſta Penates
Cui fractas tandem Gallia debet opes.
Hic veterem Angliacæ virtuti inſtaurat honorem
Seu res conſilio, ſeu ſit agenda manu.
Non animo Auguſtus melior non Julius armis
Seu mulcet gentes, ille vel ille domat.

Behold the man to diſtant nations known,
Who ſhook the Gallic, fix'd the Auſtrian throne,
New luſtre to Britannia's glory gave;
In councils prudent, as in action brave.
Not Julius more in arms diſtinguiſh'd ſhin'd,
Nor could Auguſtus better calm mankind.

In the gallery on the ſame ſide may be ſeen whole length portraits of Villiers Duke of Buckingham, ſtabbed by Felton, by Myttens;—of Queen Anne, by Mr. Lily;—and of Henry Rich Lord Holland, by an unknown maſter. A large collection of family portraits occupy the ſame gallery, the whole extent of the houſe. Below, in niches near the angles, are the MEDICEAN VENUS, and the DANCING FAWN, in bronze, from the originals in the Grand Duke of Tuſcany's

cany's collection, and executed with inimitable ſkill by Maximilian Soldani Benzi, at Florence, in 1711.

The arcades on the right and left are adorned with marble termini. Below on a black marble ſlab ſtands a fine antique DIANA and Dog, and exactly oppoſite, on a ſimilar ſlab, is a beautiful VASE with figures in relievo, from the antique, ſuppoſed to repreſent the nuptial ceremonies of the Romans.

Over the grand ſtair-caſe is a large picture, by Hudſon, of Charles Duke of Marlborough and Family; and beyond the arcades, on the other ſide of the hall, the firſt Duke and Family are delineated by the pencil of Cloſterman.

BOW-WINDOW ROOM.

From the hall, we proceed along a gallery to the bow-window room. The famous battle of BLENHEIM is pourtrayed in the tapeſtry on the right at entrance, and occupies a conſiderable ſpace. The principal action is confined to

to the taking of Marſhal Tallard. The battle of WYNENDAEL is repreſented in the tapeſtry on the left.

Over the firſt door is St. Jerome ſtudying, very fine, by Giorgioni. Over the chimney, a moſt capital original picture, by Raphael, of the Virgin and Child; St. John and St. Nicolas, formerly belonging to the Capella degli Anſidei at Perrugia.

On a pannel to the right.

A fine Head after Han. Caracci, by Sir Joſhua Reynolds.

A Head of Lady Anne Churchill, by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

A ſmall picture of the Aſſumption, by Tintoret.

A female Head, by Reubens.

Two Monkies in the habit of Monks, by Teniers.

A Madona and Child, by Lionardo da Vinci.

Over the ſecond door are two Nymphs, by an uncertain maſter.

Between two beautiful fluted Corinthian

thian pillars, another portrait of Lady Anne Churchill, by Kneller.

A ſmall pendent cabinet, with a miniature Painting, by Lady Clifden.

On the next pannel.

A Man's Head unknown, by Titian.

A beautiful etching of a Wood Nymph, by the Princeſs Royal; given to her Grace the Ducheſs of Marlborough, by her Royal Highneſs.

An allegorical original Drawing, by Cipriani, intended as a frontiſpiece to the ſecond volume of the Gemmæ Marlburienſes Selectæ.

Between the oppoſite pillars.

A portrait of Prince Eugene.

An elegant engraving of the Marquis of Taviſtock, by Watſon.

On the next pannel.

A Man's head unknown, by Holbein.

An Etching, by the Princeſs Royal.

An original Drawing, by Cipriani, the frontiſpiece to the firſt volume of the Gemmæ Marlburienſes: the ſubject from Pliny's Nat. Hiſt.

Over

Over the third door, a Battle Piece, by Wovermans.

The ceiling is painted in a novel ſtyle of ſimple elegance, and adorned with military emblems, by Hakewill. The window curtains and furniture are blue ſilk damaſk. Under the mirrors that adorn the pannels between the windows, are two marble ſlabs, on each of which is a ſleeping figure, very expreſſively ſculptured in white marble. At the other end of the room are two elegant cabinets.

DUKE's DRESSING ROOM.

The decorations of this apartment are rather elegant than ſplendid; the hangings are ſtraw-coloured flock paper, with a rich border; the furniture is chintz.

The paintings are:

I. * 1. Venus and Adonis, by an un-

* The Roman numerals I. II. III. refer to the three ſides of the apartment, beginning at the left: the fourth, and in the grand cabinet the third, is ocupied by the windows and the mirrors. The Arabic characters 1, 2, expreſs

certain artiſt;—a Magdalen, by young Palma;—our Saviour in the Virgin's lap, crowning two female Martyrs, by Titian;—St. Mark penning his Goſpel, by old Palma.

2. Inſide view of a Church, by Steenwyck;—a proſpect of a Spaniſh Sea Port, by Weenix;—the Deſtruction of Pharaoh and his Hoſt in the Red Sea, by old Frank.

II. 1. Two Beggar Boys, very characteriſtic, by Murillio;—Eſther and Ahaſuerus, by Paul Veroneſe;—three Beggar Boys, by Murillio.

III. 1. A Holy Family, very fine, by Reubens;—Charles Earl of Sunderland, by Kneller;—King George I. by an unknown artiſt;—Sleeping Venus and Satyr, with attending Cupids, from the ſchool of Reubens.

2. A view of Althorpe, the ſeat of Earl Spencer, by Tilleman.

Over the chimney are two antique

expreſs the upper and lower rows of pictures on the ſame ſide. When the arrangement would not ſuffer this eaſy mode of diſtinction, the figures are omitted.

metal

metal jars. Under the glaſs, a pair of elegant globes, by Adams.

EAST DRAWING ROOM.

The hangings and furniture crimſon damaſk; the ceiling a ſlight plain dome, of an oval ſhape; the chimney-piece is compoſed of the richeſt veined marble. Many of the paintings are very capital.

I. 1. A Holy Family, ſuppoſed by Raphael;—the Marchioneſs de Havre;—the Ducheſs of Buckingham and Offſpring;—Mary of Medicis; all by Vandyke.

2. An oval portrait of King William III. by Sir Godfrey Kneller;—Death of the Virgin Mary, by Guido;—A Holy Family, by Vandyke;—the Annunciation, by Corregio;—an oval portrait of Lady Cheſterfield, by Vandyke.

II. 1. Philip II. King of Spain, a whole length, by Titian;—a moſt capital and ſtrikingly characteriſtic BACCHANALIAN PIECE, by Reubens;—Andromeda chained to the rock, by the ſame.

2. The

2. The Offering of the Magi, by Reubens;—a French Camp, by Watteau;—a ſmall pendent cabinet, with miniatures of the preſent Family;—two ſmall Landſcapes, by a French artiſt;—Cattle, by Roſa di Tivoli;—two correſponding ſmall Landſcapes, as before;—another correſponding cabinet, incloſing miniatures;—a Landſcape, by Paul Brylle.

III. 1. A charming picture, by Sir Joſhua Reynolds, repreſenting Lady Charlotte Spencer, in the character of a Gipſey, telling her brother, Lord Henry, his fortune;—Reubens, Wife, and Child, by Reubens, a preſent to the firſt Duke, by the city of Bruſſels. Charles I. by Vandyke;—a Holy Family, ſuppoſed by Raphael, in his firſt ſtile of painting, a preſent from the town of Ghent.

2. Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I. by Vandyke;—an Angel, ſmall, by Corregio;—Cattle and Figures, by Wovermans;—a Landſcape, ſmall, by Claude Lorrain;—a broad Day-break, very fine, by Vandermeer.

GRAND CABINET.

This magnificent apartment opens to the eaſt and ſouth, and enjoys the moſt charming ſcenery. The hangings and furniture are rich crimſon damaſk, with gilding of correſponding ſplendor: the cornice, in particular, is extremely elegant, and in the centre of the ceiling is a large circular gilt plume. The chimney is compoſed of dark-coloured marble, inlaid with white, in ornamental feſtoons, with an urn, projecting in relievo, which has a delightful effect; over it ſtand the liſtening Slave, and a crouching Venus in bronze, and between them two very curious jars.

The paintings are ſome of the moſt ſuperb in any collection.

I. 1. A Holy Family, by Reubens;—a Madona ſtanding on a globe, ſurrounded by Angels, by Carlo Maratti;—the Offering of the Magi, by Reubens.

2. A moſt capital picture of our Saviour bleſſing the Children, by Reubens.

II. 1.

II. 1. Filial Affection, exemplified in the Roman Daughter, by Reubens;—the Return of our Saviour from Egypt, by Reubens;—Lot's Departure out of Sodom, by Reubens, a preſent from the town of Antwerp.

2. Portrait of Paracelſus, by Reubens;—a Virgin, her head encircled with ſtars, ſuppoſed the Miraculous Conception, in the fineſt ſtile, by Carlo Dolce; Raphael's favourite Dorothea, by himſelf; head of Reubens, by the ſame;—Pope Gregory and a Female Penitent bearing a palm branch, by Titian;—a Holy Family, by Ludovico Caracci.

BLUE DRAWING ROOM.

The hangings are blue damaſk, with ornamental gilt bordures: the furniture correſponding. The head in the centre of the chimney is a fine piece of ſculpture: the whole is delicately finiſhed in white marble. The large gilt branches on each ſide above are peculiarly elegant.

The paintings are:

I. 1. Iſaac bleſſing Jacob, by Rembrandt;—an oval in claro obſcuro, very expreſſive, from an ancient gem, by Rebecca.

II. 1. Catharine of Medicis, in colours, almoſt inimitable, by Rubens;—Time clipping Cupid's wings, an allegorical painting, by Vandyke;—William Marquis of Blandford, by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

2. A Landſcape, by Vandermeer;—a Dutch Family, by Oſtade;—a Landſcape, by Gaſpard Pouſſin;—Dorothy Counteſs of Sunderland, painted by Vandyke, but immortalized by Waller;—another Landſcape, by Gaſpard Pouſſin;—a ſmall highly finiſhed Family Piece, by Gonzales; a beautiful little Landſcape, by Wovermans.

III. 1. Ladies Caroline and Elizabeth Spencer, by Romney; the latter is repreſented as playing on her harp, the former in the act of taking a ſketch of her ſiſter;—on the right of which are two Heads of young Women, by Paul Veroneſe;—on the left, our Saviour,

and

and St. John, by Carlo Dolce; — the Woman taken in Adultery, by Rembrandt.

2. Our Saviour and the Virgin in the clouds, with a Monk paying adoration, by Hannibal Caracci; — our Saviour and the Virgin in the clouds, with accompaniments, by Tintoret; — a brilliant collection of thirty-ſix miniatures of different magnitudes, among which are three of the beautiful and unfortunate MARY Queen of SCOTS; — a Holy Family, by Ludovico Caracci; — Cattle and Figures, by Bambocchio.

WINTER DRAWING ROOM.

The tapeſtry hangings of this apartment repreſent the four CARDINAL VIRTUES, with their characteriſtic emblems and accompaniments, and in vivid beauty of colouring approach nearer to painting than any thing of the ſame kind in Blenheim.

I. FORTITUDE, with proper inſignia.

The man wrenching open the lion's jaws is extremely expreſſive.

II. On one ſide of the chimney, PRUDENCE, holding a mirror in her left hand, in the action of viewing the conduct of others, that ſhe may be the better able to regulate her own; in the right, a dart entwined with a remora, the reſpective emblems of ſpeed and delay, between which Prudence obſerves a middle courſe.

On the other ſide of the chimney, JUSTICE, with her balance and ſword, and other diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics.

III. TEMPERANCE, with her curb. The River God pouring water out of his urn, is finely imagined, and attracts the notice of every ſpectator.

Buckingham House very good

The only paintings are, an animated one of Lord Stafford and his Secretary, over the firſt door;—a very beautiful portrait of Mary Ducheſs of Richmond, with a little Girl preſenting her gloves, over the chimney;—and of Mrs. Morton and Mrs. Killigrew, two of Charles II.'s

II.'s favourites, over the other door: all by Vandyke.

In the centre of the very elegant chimney-piece, formed of the richeſt marbles, is an alto relievo of Cupid and Pſyche's Marriage, from the antique. A notification in Greek characters is prefixed, that Tryphon executed the original. Over, are two Centaurs in bronze, and two beautiful urns of Derbyſhire ſpar.

In this room alſo are ſmall bronzes of Cupids, and Hercules killing the Centaurs. The mirrors are ſingularly ſuperb.

DINING ROOM.

Is is well adapted for its deſtination, being large, lofty, and commodiouſly ſituated. The ceiling is richly ſtuccoed, and the ſides are wainſcotted in large pannels, painted white. The chimney-piece is peculiarly handſome: it ſupports an elegant clock, mounted on an elephant in broze, and crowned with an American Indian.

The productions of the pencil are:

I. 1. Cattle and Figures, in a very capital ſtile, by Caſtiglione;—a Bacchanalian Piece, by Vandyke.

II. 1. Lot and his Daughters, very fine, by Reubens, a preſent from the Emperor of Germany;—Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I. by Vandyke;—Venus and Adonis, by Reubens, another preſent from the Emperor.

III. The preſent DUKE, DUCHESS, and SIX CHILDREN—Ladies Caroline, Elizabeth, Charlotte, and Anne;—the Marquis of Blandford, and Lord Henry: the two youngeſt, LORD FRANCIS and LADY AMELIA, were born ſince this very capital picture (which coſt ſeven hundred guineas) was painted by Sir Joſhua Reynolds.—The Rape of Europa, by Paul Veroneſe.

On the pannels near the windows, at each end, are three ſmall Landſcapes, by Wootton.

SALOON.

This noble apartment is highly finiſhed,

niſhed, and richly decorated: it is lined in the lower part with marble in the Italian taſte, and its four door-caſes are entirely compoſed of the ſame beautiful and durable material. Over each door, which face the four quarters, are the arms of the firſt Duke. Above the marble baſement are ſix compartments, in which different nations of the world are depicted in their characteriſtic dreſſes and expreſſions, by La Guerre. Theſe however are rather caricatures than natural delineations: they are ſhewn in the following manner, and ſaid to repreſent,

I. The Painter,—French—Engliſh *, and Scotch.

II. Spaniards.

III. Moors and Negroes.

IV. Chineſe and Tartars.

V. Turks.

VI. Dutch and Swedes.

The ceiling is the height of the building, and executed by the ſame artiſt

* The Portrait of the Engliſhman is believed to repreſent Dean Jones, Chaplain to Sarah Ducheſs of Marlborough.

with

with a felicity both in deſign and performance. It emblematically repreſents JOHN DUKE of MARLBOROUGH in the career of victory arreſted by the hand of PEACE, while TIME reminds him of the rapidity of his own flight.

Over the firſt chimney ſtands an antique buſt of a Roman Conſul;—and at the ſame end of the room, a marble ſlab with a Sleeping Venus.

Over the ſecond chimney is an antique buſt of Caracalla;—and on another marble ſlab, Cleopatra and the Aſp.

GREEN DRAWING ROOM.

It is hung with tapeſtry, repreſenting in vivid colours ſome of the military exploits of John Duke of Marlborough.

I. Battle of Dunnewert.

II. Battle of Liſle, on the right of the chimney;—Siege of Liſle on the left. The French ſpy is very expreſſively delineated.

III. Battle of Malplaquet. The eager attention

attention of the perſon receiving orders, is admirably drawn.

Over the firſt door is a charming portrait of a young Knight of St. John of Jeruſalem, by Barrocio;—over the oppoſite door, a very maſterly painting of Meleager and Atalanta, by Reubens.

On a pannel near the window at entrance, is the Adoration of the Shepherds, by Lucca Giordano.

A Madona and Child, by Nicholas Pouſſin.

Figures encircled with a wreath of flowers, by Rottenhammer.

On the oppoſite pannel.

The Offering of the Magi, by Lucca Giordano.

A Holy Family, by Nich. Pouſſin.

Figures encircled with a wreath of flowers, by Rottenhammer.

A moſt beautiful and curious Clock on a new conſtruction, by Vulliamy, ſtands on the chimney-piece. A Serpent bending down its head from the top of a ſmall urn, round which the hours are arranged, points out the time with its ſting;

and

and on the ſame urn, an elegant figure of CONTEMPLATION leaning, gives the whole a ſingular and rather monumental air. On each ſide are Boys Gambols in bronze.

Above is a highly finiſhed and inexpreſſibly attractive picture of her Grace the DUCHESS of Marlborough, in an elegant white dreſs, by Romney.

On the marble ſlabs under the windows are bronzes of Fame and Mercury mounted on Pegaſi.

The curtains, ſophas, and other furniture, are deep green damaſk.

STATE DRAWING ROOM.

This apartment has been recently decorated, and furniſhed with the utmoſt magnificence. The ceiling is elegant; —the cornice richly gilt;—and the bordure round the room is in a correſponding ſtile. The mirrors are almoſt unrivalled in the ſuperlative elegance of their frames—the magnitude of their plates is likewiſe very conſiderable.

The

The chimney is of the whiteſt marble: it is adorned with a ſmall central urn, ſupported by two griffins; theſe likewiſe are part of the embelliſhments of the glaſſes: they belong to the family arms. The marble ſlabs are proportionate to the ſplendor of the reſt. A highly finiſhed cabinet at the lower end ſupports a rich luſtre. The curtains and furniture are white damaſk.

One of the principal ornaments however of the room is a moſt ſuperb picture of his Grace the DUKE of Marlborough, in his garter robes, by Romney: it is placed over the chimney. From this beautiful painting, Jones has executed a very happy mezzotinto: another of the Ducheſs from Romney's Painting has likewiſe been finiſhed by the ſame artiſt.

The tapeſtry is a continuation of the firſt Duke's atchievements.

I. and II. The March to Bouchain.

II. and III. The Siege of Bouchain. In this piece, Lord Cadogan's Dog, which attended his maſter through the wars,

wars, and returned ſafe, makes a conſpicuous figure.

Over the firſt door is a Fruit Piece, by Lucca Giordano.

Over the oppoſite door, St. Laurence diſtributing the ornaments of the altar, by Il Prete Genoeſe.

STATE BED CHAMBER.

In a palace there muſt be apartments for pomp as well as for utility; this is one of the former, and very ſplendid of the kind. The furniture and hangings are rich blue damaſk, interlaced with gold. The bed-poſts are elegantly fluted, and covered with burniſhed gold: their extremities adorned with military emblems. The top riſes into a dome, ſurmounted with a ducal coronet;—at the head are the family arms.

The chimney-piece is decorated with bronzes of Hercules killing the Centaurs, and the Hydra;—between theſe is a buſt of Diana;---over it is a capital picture,

ture, by Lucca Giordano, repreſenting Seneca bleeding to death, while with philoſophic compoſure he dictates to his amanuenſis.

On a pannel to the right is a portrait of Edward VI. by Holbein.

A view of Architecture, by Panini.

The burning of Troy, by old Frank.

Over each door is a piece of ſtill life, by Malteſe.

From this ſtately ſuit of rooms, where the profuſion of ſplendid objects is apt to dazzle the organs of ſight, the eye is both charmed are relieved on entering

THE LIBRARY.

This very ſpacious apartment, which occupies the entire weſt front, is two hundred feet long, and thirty-one feet nine inches wide in the centre.

It is impoſſible to conceive any thing more ſuperb than the ſolid columns of marble, which ſupport a rich entablature, the Doric pilaſters of the ſame, the ſurrounding baſement of black marble, and the

the ſtuccoed compartments of the lofty vaulted ceiling, which open a fine field for the pencil of the firſt maſter.

This noble room was originally intended as a gallery for paintings; but has ſince been furniſhed with the grand SUNDERLAND collection of books, compriſing upwards of twenty thouſand volumes, in various languages, arts, and ſciences; all arranged in commodious caſes with latticed doors, on the eaſt ſide through its whole extent, and the two ends.

At the upper end of the library ſtands a highly finiſhed white marble ſtatue of QUEEN ANNE, in her coronation robes, by Ryſbrack; on the pedeſtal is this inſcription:

To the Memory of Queen ANNE!
Under whoſe Auſpices
John Duke of MARLBOROUGH
conquered,
And to whoſe Munificence
He and his Poſterity
With Gratitude
Owe the Poſſeſſion of BLENHEIM.
A. D. MDCCXXVI.

In

In a receſs on the weſt ſide, is an antique ſtatue, inſcribed JULIA DOMNA; —and lower down, another of DIANA and DOG, both on mahogany therms.

At the lower end is a buſt of ALEXANDER the Great; a fine ſpecimen of Grecian ſculpture, in good preſervation, dug out of the ruins of Herculaneum; and ſupported by an elegant modern therm.

Over the book-caſes on the eaſt ſide are the ſubſequent paintings and ſculptures:

Lord Godolphin.

Duke of Montague.

Above the firſt chimney, a buſt of Charles Earl of Sunderland, the collector of the books:—beneath, a ſea piece of Jonah and the Whale, after Pouſſin: —on the chimney, a buſt of the Emperor Adrian.

Counteſs of Sunderland.

Counteſs of Bridgwater.

Counteſs Cowper.

Hon. John Spencer.

Over the grand marble door-caſe that

communicates with the hall, a buſt of Milo Crotonenſis.

Elizabeth Ducheſs of Marlborough.

Charles Duke of Marlborough.

Sarah Ducheſs of Marlborough.

John Duke of Marlborough.

Over the ſecond chimney, a Girl's Head, antique. — A Landſcape, after Pouſſin; above, a buſt of Charles Duke of Marlborough, by Ryſbrack.

Queen Anne.

King William.

From the noble bow-windows on the weſt, is an elyſian proſpect of the beautiful deſcent to the lake, and of the pendent grove on the oppoſite hill. Indeed every apartment has its appropriate beauties, both internal and external: the eye of diſcernment will recognize many which the brevity of our plan prevented us from noting; to the more curſory obſerver this deſcription will prove an uſeful monitor. One ſtriking ornament however we have neglected to remark: the mahogany doors throughout this whole ſuit are ſplendidly finiſhed, and

are

are worthy of the apartments to which they conduct.

CHAPEL.

From the library we proceed along a piazza, with arcades below, to the Chapel, ſituated in the weſtern wing of the palace. The coup d'œil on entering is extremely grand, and the impreſſion ſuch as correſponds with the place. The ſtile of painting, and the degree of light, are both peculiarly happy: the large compartments of ſober grey are finely relieved by the ſurrounding white; and the ſhade of foliage that partially darkens the windows diffuſes an air of compoſed ſolemnity, unmixed with gloom, unaccompanied with melancholy.

The chief ornament, however, is a ſtately MONUMENT in various marble, to the memory of the firſt Duke and Ducheſs, by Ryſbrack. They are repreſented with their two Sons who died young, as ſupported by FAME and HISTORY: theſe are coloſſal figures, and

being moſt prominent, are the moſt ſtriking in the group. The pen of HISTORY ſeems to have traced this inſcription on a tablet, which ſhe holds in the other hand:

To the Memory
Of John Duke of Marlborough and
his two Sons
His Ducheſs has erected
this Monument
In the Year of Chriſt, MDCCXXXIII.

Beneath, is the taking of Marſhal Tallard, in baſſo relievo.

The altar-piece repreſents our Saviour taking down from the Croſs, by Jordaens of Antwerp.

The gallery for the family is ſplendidly hung with crimſon velvet, fringed with gold. The cuſhions are correſponding. Over the chimney is a curious painting on black marble, by Aleſſandro Veroneſe.

TITIAN ROOM.

This apartment adjoins the THEATRE near

near the entrance of the Gardens, and is ornamented with a ſuperb collection of paintings by TITIAN; a magnificent preſent from Victor Amadeus, King of Sardinia, to John, Duke of Marlborough.

Theſe capital performances of this celebrated maſter are now firſt diſplayed, for the ſake of amateurs in the painting art. They conſiſt of the following ſeries.

I. MARS and VENUS.
II. CUPID and PSYCHE.
III. APOLLO and DAPHNE.
IV. HERCULES and DEJANIRA.
V. VULCAN and CERES.
VI. BACCHUS and ARIADNE.
VII. JUPITER, JUNO, and Io.
VIII. NEPTUNE and AMPHITRITE.

CHINA GALLERY*.

This elegant fabric, erected purpoſely for the reception of the ſuperb

* This collection was formed by Mr. Spalding, and preſented by him as an appendant to Blenheim, on condition that the care and exhibition of it ſhould remain under his ſole direction for the term of his natural life,

collection now depoſited here, ſtands cloſe to the HOME LODGE, and is ſeparated from the Park by iron paliſadoes.

It was fitted up this preſent year 1796; and preſents an additional attraction to the viſitors of Blenheim, who delight in the antique, and curious ſpecimens of the porcelain manufacture.

But it is not the connoiſſeur only who will be gratified by this diſplay; — no eye of taſte can fail to receive ſatiſfaction from the ſight of this ſplendid collection, nor will the arrangement paſs unregarded by the moſt ſuperficial obſerver.

The gallery, whoſe external figure repreſents a croſs, is divided into five compartments.

The two rooms at each end are fitted up in an octagonal form, and lighted from the top, with the porcelain regularly arranged on ſlight pilaſters, or fan-

and that it ſhould for ever be annexed as an heir-loom to the Marlborough Family; unleſs the Duke choſe to give it to ſome Univerſity, publick Muſeum, or Corporation.

cifully

ciſully ſuſpended by braſs hooks againſt the walls. The centre room, which occupies the tranſverſe of the croſs, is circular, and has a light in the form of a dome in the middle, and a ſmaller one on each ſide. This apartment is particularly magnificent. Round the walls are ten pannels and twelve pilaſters, filled with choice ſpecimens; and at a proper diſtance in the area, are eight pilaſters and ſix open ſtands, with a pyramidal pagoda in the centre, ſupporting many pieces of ſingular value or beauty.

The whole gallery may be ſeen at the firſt entry; and, from the reflected light, the diſtribution of parts, and the ſplendor of the materials, which are here diſplayed to the greateſt advantage, it may not inaptly be compared to the fanciful deſcriptions of enchanted palaces in poeſy and romance.

This aſſemblage of ancient porcelain conſiſts of an immenſe quantity of both uſeful and ornamental articles, in every ſpecies of that elegant manufacture, from

the earlieſt ages till the art was loſt. Some ſpecimens exhibit its infant ſtate, which, according to the Abbé Raynal, in his Hiſtory of the Indies, may be reaſonably ſuppoſed to be 3000 years ago. The remote antiquity of theſe may be inferred from the rudeneſs of the deſigns and the imperfect crackled appearance of the baking. It is long before art can be brought to perfection. To glaze and bake in the high ſtile of many pieces in this collection, muſt require reiterated attempts, and the experience of years—perhaps of ages.

Among other varieties are many of the choiceſt pieces of the old blue, and white, and pale japan brown edge, ſo much eſteemed by the curious. Likewiſe a numerous aſſortment of thoſe very ſcarce and valuable ſorts, the antique bleu celeſte, and deep purple.

It is impoſſible to enter into a minute deſcription of articles ſo various and extenſive; but we cannot refrain from particularizing a few, and enumerating the

the principal ſources from which they were drawn by the ingenious and indefatigable Collector.

Among many other pieces deſerving attention, are a pair of ſmall bottles, once the property of Queen Anne—A large japan tea-pot, a preſent from Louis XIV. to the Duke of Richelieu—Two ſmaller ones, from the Collection of the Duke of Orleans, father to Egalité—Some pieces from the late Princeſs Amelia's Cabinet—Many from the Portland Muſeum, and from the celebrated Collection of the Duke d'Aumont at Paris—A ſingular piece from the Duke of Argyle's curioſities in the former reign—Several articles from the late Ducheſs of Kingſton's—from Selima, Counteſs of Huntingdon's—from M. Calonne's—and M. Beaumarchais' Collections. Five ornamental pieces, preſented by a Nabob to a Governor of Bengal in the reign of William III. poſſeſs uncommon beauty. A large white tea-pot, once in the poſſeſſion of Oliver Cromwell, will be deemed a curioſity—Two pieces of jaſper

per China, ſomewhat reſembling ſhells, are remarkably beautiful and rare, as are ſeveral of that ſcarce ſort called honey-comb. It ſhould alſo be obſerved, that ſome ſpecimens are unique in their kind.

A collateral room adjoining the entry to the gallery is filled with ſcarce and elegant ſpecimens of Roman and old earthen ware, too numerous to mention. A delf jar of the latter kind was evidently fabricated long before the Dutch threw off the Spaniſh yoke, as appears from the dreſs of the figures—But one of the moſt ſingular curioſities, is a ſmall piece repreſenting a fiſh, which was brought from Athens, and is ſuppoſed to be coeval with that celebrated republic.

In this apartment likewiſe is a ſmall ſelect collection of the fineſt old black and gold wooden japan;—and a numerous and beautiful aſſortment of old copper enamels of the black and white kind, and alſo in various colours, on ſubjects both ſacred and profane.

Theſe ſlight notices may ſuffice to ſhew the value and extent of this collection.

The

The curious, and real amateurs will ſatiſfy themſelves as to its peculiar merits.

GARDENS.

The gardens or pleaſure grounds occupy an area of two hundred acres and upwards. On part of the north, and the eaſt ſide, they are ſurrounded by a ſunk fence, which, without breaking the grandeur of the ſcene, ſerves to ſeparate the parts that compoſe it. On the weſt ſide, they make a bold deſcent to the lake, which falling from a lofty precipice at the ſouth-weſt angle, formed likewiſe the ſouthern boundary, before the recent additions of a conſiderable portion of the adjoining vale, and of the face of the oppoſite hill. Nature, indeed, ſeems to have placed this fine chain, which deſcribes the figure of a bow on the weſt and ſouth of the river, as the only regular termination of the pleaſure grounds, and the line of demarcation between them and the park. The lofty umbrageous trees which cover its ſide and brow form

form a noble back ground, and give an unity and finiſh to the ſcene. The features of the vale through which the river winds, from the caſcade as far as the new bridge, entirely correſpond with the reſt of the picture. Art might heighten them, but Nature could not have been more propitious: they invite embelliſhment from the facility with which it might be applied. Or may it not be an effect of the juſteſt taſte, to render the tranſition from the more ornamental ſtile of the garden to the firſt ſhades of the ruder majeſty of the park ſo very imperceptible, that the eye at a ſmall diſtance cannot determine where the one commences and the other ends? In animate nature, the cloſe alliance between the laſt genus of one claſs and the firſt of another has been ever conſidered as an inſtance of beauteous deſign and harmonious execution; and why may not the ſame hold good in inanimate objects! The juſt gradation of tints, and the eaſy blending of colours, are indiſputably requiſite to the compoſition of a perfect whole!

The

The uſual entrance into the gardens is a little to the left of the eaſtern gate of Blenheim. The EAST FRONT firſt ſalutes the view: before it ſpreads a cheerful lawn of an oblong form, extending a conſiderable way into the park; at firſt fringed with little clumps of evergreens encircled and interſperſed with flowers and deciduous ſhrubs; then broken by a few ſcattered trees, which riſing on different ſides of the boundary effectually conceal it; and afterwards lined by ſtately trees, that throw a finely chequered ſhade on the verdant ſwerd below, and ranging in irregular pomp preclude ſtiffneſs from mingling with beauty.

A walk of pebbly gravel of the moſt beautiful texture and regularity (which however prevails in the pleaſure-grounds, and blends utility with ornament) winding to the eaſt between riſing plantations, and clumps of trees and ſhrubs in various ſhapes, at intervals is opened to highly embelliſhed lawn; and ſoon taking an eaſy bend to the ſouth, conducts to a

TEMPLE,

TEMPLE, charged with the following elegant and loyal inſcription on a highly poliſhed marble tablet:

DEO MAXIMO CONSERVATORI,
ER PROVIDENTIÆ DIVINÆ:
OB RECUPERATAM GEORGII TERTII,
REGIS OPTIMI, PIENTISSIMI SALUTEM,
HOC MARMOR
GEORGIUS DUX MARLBURIENSIS
EXPLETO DESIDERIO, VOTIQUE COMPOS,
IN ALIQUOD GRATI ANIMI TESTIMONIUM,
LÆTUS, LUBENSQUE DEDICAVIT.
ANNO SALUTIS HUMANÆ
MDCCLXXXIX.

Over the tablet, is a beautiful medallion of his Majeſty.—This ſtructure is adorned with Corinthian capitals. It emerges from a ſmall thicket, which backs it and determines its ſite, and without impoſing the idea of ſolitude renders it ſufficiently ſequeſtered. Before we reach this temple, the Triumphal Arch and Woodſtock Tower are ſeen in pleaſing perſpective. From hence, the ſcene gradually changes. Inſtead of embelliſhed lawn, we become emboſomed in trees of venerable

rable majeſty. The park and gardens ſeem to unite, or their diſtinction is loſt. The trimneſs of the walk, and the occaſional ſight of evergreens, alone diſcriminate the latter.

The parts unite,
And ſtrength of ſhade contends with ſtrength of light.

Open grove at an agreeable diſtance on each ſide continues for a conſiderable ſpace. The whole is a delightful Home-walk, ſheltered by the winding of its direction from every blaſt: poſſeſſing ſufficient variety in every part, with an aſpect continually improving.

From this pleaſing route, however, we are drawn aſide to the contemplation of the FLOWER GARDEN. A diverticle from the principal walk, near an ornamental tripod, inclines to a thick grove on the right, in which this elyſian ſpot is placed. In our progreſs, the trees form an embowering ſhade,—as we enter,---they range in amphitheatric pride, and preſent a reclining face of foliage from the ground to a vaſt height above.

The

The ſudden burſt of ſo much beauty ſtrikes the eye; the muſick of the ſpray delights the ear;—the fragrance recreates the other ſenſes: images of tranquil joy fix their faireſt impreſſions on the mind; and if they cannot efface the remembrance of ills, they ſoothe it into reſignation.

See waving woods their aged arms diſplay,
And quivering ſun-beams ſhed a partial day:
Long viſtas ſhooting from the wondering eyes,
And bloom perennial pour unnumbered dyes!
See flower-crown'd FLORA ſpread her lucid train,
And give to BEAUTY all the ſmiling plain;
While ſylvan PAN, amid the ſhady trees,
Joins in the concert with the ſwelling breeze.

This wilderneſs of ſweets, which occupies about an acre, is copied from the deſign of Madame Pompadour, as diſplayed in the gardens of VERSAILLES. The outline is elegant; the execution charming; the accompaniments are judicious.

In the centre of variouſly arranged bouquets, which the boſom of the earth ſupports, is an Obeliſk of porphyry, ſurrounded with four white marble vaſes, filled

filled with annual flowers; on the north is a neat Temple, properly dedicated to FLORA; and during the ſummer months, every interſtice left by the trunks of the ſurrounding grove is repleniſhed with oranges, lemons, and other exotic trees, ſhrubs, and plants of the greateſt delicacy and the richeſt odour, which ranking in natural progreſſion before the permanent vegetative tribes, ſeem alſo the denizens of the ſpot.

There are different outlets through the grove: but to proceed in the regular tour, we take that near the ſouth-eaſt angle; and, after being embоſomed in trees for a few paces, the ſcene opens to the left, but ſoon ſhuts with aggravated gloom. The trees become ſo thick and umbrageous, that the meridian ſun only plays on their tops, or permeates an accidental break. The ſweet ſmelling lime, the dark cheſnut, and the airy beech, with evergreens below, bear the chief proportion here. All is ſtill — all is ſolemn. The contraſt with the flower

garden is very ſtriking, with the view that ſoon opens extremely captivating.

The Palladian gate, or entrance into the KITCHEN GARDENS, appears on the eaſt; and the eye darts over a cheerful landſcape to the ſouth. On this ſide the walls of the kitchen gardens, which are fourteen feet high, are concealed by irregular plantations of laurels and other ſhrubs, thinly ſcattered with foreſt trees. From the gate we trace their vaſt extent, clothed with the choiceſt fruit trees; and we behold an area of eight acres, while four more remain unſeen, furniſhed with every article of culinary uſe, or of elegance in the deſſert, and replete with every requiſite appendage for bringing it to perfection.

Falling into the Home-walk at this place, the deviation from which has been previouſly mentioned, we ſoon enter the SHEEP-WALK, which is half a mile in length, and through its whole extent abounding with rural imagery. Frequently covered with a flock of more than a thou-

a thouſand ſheep, all of the moſt beautiful and valuable, and ſome of the moſt curious kinds, this ſpace, though poſſeſſing features of characteriſtic negligence, is not leſs rich or leſs animated than the moſt favourite ſpots in the garden.

The open grove winds away to the right, and on this hand we catch a glimpſe of the ſouth front of the Palace, which is thrown into various perſpective as we advance. In other directions we enjoy a pictureſque view of Beckley Hill, juſt peeping over the intervening heights; of Witham's lofty woods riſing to the ſummit of Botley, where the trees range in ſolitary ſtate; and through the long perſpective of a rich champaign, in which Ensham Tower forms a very conſpicuous object when illumined with a morning ſun, the diſtant White Horse Hills are ſeen to elevate themſelves into a background. Nor are remote pictures alone attractive at this hour: the deep ſhade that darkens the neighbouring village of Bladon is finely contraſted with the level beams that glance on the water below.

Proceeding, in one place the NEW BRIDGE appears broke and ruinous by the fall of a tree that overhangs the bank; in another it ſhews its arches entire, and even the lower viſible reach of water is ſeen ſparkling through its baluſtrades: farther, the centre arch alone is perceptible; and ſometimes the whole is loſt. Such is the effect of grouping and combining! The lawn is ſprinkled with beautiful groups of trees: the majeſtic oak with pendent inclination to the ſtream is the frequent ornament of the ſlope.

About the middle of this walk, the top of HANDBOROUGH Spire, though more than three miles off, appears emerging from the boſom of the deep wood beyond the lake; and cloſe on the right is ſeen the SHEPHERD'S COT, a little thatched edifice, compoſed of the trunks of trees fancifully arranged, backed by a clump, and ſhaded by horſe-cheſnuts in front.

Near this ſpot we may pauſe to contemplate the beauties which the changing

ing ſcene diſplays. Nothing can be more pictureſque than BLADON when gilded with an evening ſun: the antique low tower, and here and there the end of a building, glow with the crimſon of his beams, or the window, partially ſhaded by intervening trees, reflects them like living fire. CLAUDE would have caught the tints with rapture; he would have combined the objects into a picture; and on its effect he might have reſted the immortality of his fame.

A little beyond the Shepherd's Cot is the firſt opening of the CASCADE; and for ſome ſpace it forms a principal attraction. The water ſeems to flow out of the deep wood that bounds the head; its courſe is totally hid by the bend, by the figure of the banks, and the effect of plantation. Every ſtep we deſcend towards the caſcade the embelliſhments thicken, the ſcene becomes more illuſtrious. Groups of acacia, cedar, poplar, cheſnut, and beech, decorate the declivity down to the river; and beyond it at a proportionate diſtance, the back-ground,

as far as the commencement of the new garden, is adorned with a profuſion of hawthorns, ſurmounted by noble pendent trees, which, ſtretching round as far as the eye can reach, terminate in the near horizon.

But before we ſink into the vale, it will not be unpleaſing to take a retroſpective view of the landſcape we are leaving behind. The lofty Spire of KIDLINGTON ſeems to belong to the park; the diſtant hills, formerly obſerved, are caſt into different perſpective; and a new and wider range is diſplayed, farther than natural viſion can diſtinguiſh objects, and till the blue hills of BUCKS cloſe with the bounding ſky. Among theſe ASHRIDGE, the ſeat of the Duke of Bridgwater, may be aſcertained in a clear day.

The obeliſk of the FOUNTAIN ſoon peeps between a little woody iſland and the caſcade; and the grand RIVER, which a few paces before was inviſible, burſts at once on the eye in a broad ſheet, without apparent continuity or connection. Before we reach the termination

of

of the ſheep-walk, we loſe the caſcade on the left; to it however we at laſt deſcend between clumps and groups of the moſt luxuriant and delicate trees of various climes, intermixed with flowers and ſhrubs of the utmoſt fragrance and beauty. The ground, which at firſt is higheſt on the left, ſoon aſſumes a determined ſuperiority on the right. It is thrown into maſſes with a maſterly hand; it has received every embelliſhment that refined taſte can confer on natural beauty; and we enjoy the touch of art without waking the idea that revolts at its diſplay.

Here various trees compoſe a chequer'd ſcene,
Glowing in gay diverſities of green;
There the full ſtream thro' intermingling glades,
Shines a broad lake, or falls in loud caſcades.

In the vicinity of the caſcade, whoſe ſides are finely ſhaded, the water is quite loſt above. Even from the bridge that fronts it at fifty feet diſtance, we only ſee the fall without tracing the ſupply. The charming reach below appears in its moſt varied features from this bridge,

which connects the gardens; and when the full ſtream devolves from the rocky barrier, and bounds from one point to another in foamy pride with deafening roar, nothing can be more grateful to a contemplative mind than ſuch a ſcene and ſuch a ſituation.

Down the ſteep fall devolve the foaming tides,
Unfading verdure clothes th' aſpiring ſides.
Emblem of life! where waves on waves ariſe,
While Hope looks up, and views ſerener ſkies;
Where ſtill the troublous ſea inceſſant roars,
And ſtill Hope flatters, as we eye the ſhores.

The NEW GARDEN, which we now enter, though of no very great extent, contains many beauties peculiar to itſelf, many views of magnificent and appropriate ſcenery. Following the courſe of the river on the left, we ſoon reach NEWFOUND WELL, a mineral ſpring of the chalybeate kind, ſaid to poſſeſs very active virtues. In the front of a dark clump riſes a pedeſtal ſupporting an urn, and from an aperture in the former guſhes the ſpring; and being received into an antique baſon, charged with numerous fancy figures, in alto relievo, much

much injured, flows out near the top by the mouths of two lions, and quickly mixes with the river. Again we have a view of the new bridge, and of a ſerpentine reach of water, embracing the iſland, and gliding on with glaſſy ſmoothneſs. The FOUNTAIN next attracts our notice.

> There River-Gods reclin'd at eaſe explore
> A ſcene more lovely than their native ſhore;
> Confeſs HESPERIA boaſts no charms that vie
> With the bright landſcapes which around them lie.

It is ſituated at the bottom of the hill, and forms an object not unworthy of its place and deſtination. In the centre of an elegant capacious baſon, where dolphins ſeem to ſport, ſtands the baſe, formed of a ſpecies of porous ſtone, permeable by the water, and thrown together in rude pomp, with a cavern from eaſt to weſt, from which ſeem to iſſue, in a drinking attitude, a lion and a ſea-horſe, the attributes of Europe and Africa.

On the four extremities of the rock, which ſupports the obeliſk, are four River-

ver-Gods, ſculptured in white marble, with a delicacy and expreſſion not to be ſurpaſſed. Theſe are intended to repreſent the DANUBE, the NILE, the LA PLATA, and the GANGES, the four principal rivers of the different quarters of the globe. The DANUBE reſts his right leg on an oar *—The NILE veils his head with claſſical propriety—The AMERICAN River-God lifts up his left hand and eyes in ſurpriſe, as if firſt made known to the reſt of the world — The ASIATIC River-God with a placid look ſtretches out his hand to a ſerpent crawling and a ſhell. This laſt ſeems to be a different deſign from the original, where the GANGES is repreſented as recumbent, crowned with ſedge, and a rudder between his legs, with the palm-tree behind.

The following arms appear on one ſide of the baſe of the obeliſk;—under a coronet in a bordure of lions and caſ-

* In the Vatican at Rome is an ancient ſculpture of the TIBER in the ſame attitude. May not Bernini have intended that river inſtead of the Danube?

tles

tles per ſaltier for Caſtile and Leon, two baſkets and five. On the oppoſite ſide, in a bordure of ſaltiers, under a coronet, two wolves, with lambs in their mouths.

Above, on the ſquare pedeſtal of the obeliſk, which is of white marble, is the ſubſequent inſcription in four different languages, Latin, Greek, Italian, and Spaniſh.

AD INNOCENTIUM XI. SUMMUM PONTIFICEM.
PRO. CAROLO. II. HISPANIARUM REGE
EXCELC: D. D. GASPAR: DE. HARO, ET
GUZMAN.
MURCHIO. DE. CARPIO. ET HELICHEO ORATOR.
AD TYPUM MOLIS. IN AGONALI FORO ERECTÆ.
AB EQUITE. BERNINO. OPUS. HOC. EXTRUI.
JUSSIT, EODEM. DIRIGENTE. QUI. INTERIM.
DUM PERFICERETUR. DEFUNCTUS.
HOC: POSTHUMO. PARTU: INEXHAUSTAM.
MENTIS. FOECUNDITATEM CLAUSIT.
ANNO D: M: DC: LXXXI.

This fine piece of ſculpture, the laſt work of BERNINI, and a copy from the magnificent fountain in the Piazza Navona at Rome, was a preſent from the Spaniſh ambaſſador at the Papal court to the firſt Duke of Marlborough. It has only

only been recently erected; and during the many years it lay neglected, it was much damaged, and part of its characteriſtic appendages and adjuncts loſt. Still however it bears a cloſe reſemblance to the noble original; proves an ornament to the gardens, and the admiration of ſpectators.

From the fountain the path meanders up hill. The left is open to the charming vale through which the river glides; the right is occaſionally ſhaded by groups of trees. Almoſt every ſtep preſents a new ſcene; the tranſitions are ſudden, but never harſh: even the ſtrong contraſt between the elegant ſculpture we have juſt left, and the wild rock ſeats that occupy the brow, gives an additional impreſſion to each. Above theſe is a noble view into the park: the HIGH LODGE, with its antique battlements amidſt an amphitheatre of venerable trees, is a ſtriking object in the landſcape. From this ſpot we wind to the right, and freſh beauties again arreſt the attention. To paint every change of

ſcenery

ſcenery that preſents itſelf in the ſpace of an hundred yards would be impoſſible: the impreſſion can only be conveyed by the eye;—the happieſt deſcription would fail. At one point, we have a glimpſe of the river; at another perhaps it is loſt; the turrets of the Palace juſt emerge; an expanſe of water with a foreſt line of wood draws the view; and, at a few paces diſtance, the Palace, the river, the two principal bridges, and the fine terrace on the weſt of the gardens, all burſt with irreſiſtible beauty and attraction. At this ſpot the ſublime predominates in a very high degree; and frigid indeed muſt that taſte be, which will not feel and confeſs the energy of the ſcene. When the riſing ſun throws its horizontal rays on the gilded orbs of Blenheim, the tops of the trees catch his radiance, and the withdrawing ſhade lightly floats on the ſurface of the lake; nature does not furniſh a picture of more brilliancy than this. A little farther, and the intervening groups allow only glimpſes;—again

the

the proſpect opens, the park diſplays its ſylvan honours on the north, and on the eaſt the Chiltern hills bound the ſight. At the utmoſt extent of viſion is WINCHENDON, formerly the ſeat of the Duke of Wharton, now the property of his Grace of Marlborough. There is ſomething grand in the idea: the vaſt ſpace between is ſwallowed up: and fancy combining the diſtant domains in the ſame landſcape, gives a ſanction and a ſolution to the magnificence around.

On the right, as we turn down towards the iron-bridge, ſtands l'ARROTINO, or, as it is uſually called, the LISTENING SLAVE, a fine caſt in bronze from the antique, by BENZI. Deſcending to the river, from diſtant views the tranſition becomes inſtantaneous to near ones. The water is ſeen flowing round to the caſcade: the bank on the right is abrupt and rocky, chiefly planted with ſumach; on the left, it is adorned with the faireſt riſing plantations, which in a ſhort time will render the ſpot more characteriſtically romantic.

On

On the Blenheim ſide of the iron-bridge the caſcade and its accompaniments are wholly loſt; the former can only be traced by its murmurs and its daſhing. The walk now runs along the left of the upper river: the lower is ſcarcely perceptible. Even the inferior path, by which we deſcend from the ſheep-walk to the caſcade, though only a few yards below, is rendered entirely diſtinct, by the figure of the ground, and the groups that adorn it. As we advance to the angle of the ſheep-walk, the ground becomes gradually more elevated. Beyond the broad expanſe of water on the left, a fine outline of pendent wood ſtretches along to an indeterminate length; on the other hand is highly decorated lawn. The TERRACE may be ſaid to commence at this point; and its captivating charms are gradually developed as we proceed. From a moderate elevation above the level of the lake, it riſes to a bold declivity, feathered down to the brink with majeſtic trees, interſperſed with plantations of younger

younger growth, grouped and arranged in the moſt enchanting ſtyle, while the wild foreſt that clothes the oppoſite bank is reflected in the cryſtal tide below. The lake is farther enlivened with various pleaſure veſſels, diſpoſed in ſuch a manner as may beſt adorn this illuſtrious ſcene. Behind is a delightful perſpective of the back-ground on the ſouth-weſt; and the caſcade glitters in all its grandeur.

As we approximate the level of the terrace, the ſhaft of Churchill's PILLAR appears in front above the ſurrounding trees; by degrees it opens to its very baſe. The dark groves in the northern part of the park begin to diſplay themſelves; and couched in the front of one, the celebrated BATH of Roſamond may be dimly diſcerned. The water too aſſumes a variety of figures; the outline becomes more indented; and a collateral branch of undefined extent, running up a deep vale from the principal ſtream, without appearing to derive its ſole importance from it, has the pleaſing effect

of

of ſeeming to augment its current. DITCHLEY Woods form the horizon; theſe fall into the back-ground of the ſcene, at a diſtance ſufficient for greatneſs, and without any disjunction of parts.

Here we reach the Temple of DIANA, which ſtands on a ſummit of the declivity. — We ſurvey the landſcape with rapture — we confeſs the *ne plus ultra* of pictureſque embelliſhment. This temple indeed marks the happy ſpot where the aſſemblage of different attractions operate with ſingular advantage. All is great—all is executed on a ſcale of proportionate magnificence; and though every part of the gardens has peculiar charms, this terrace—this point in particular, as a home view combines more than all, and exhibits almoſt every different excellence of each.

The temple itſelf is a beautiful ſtructure, deſigned by Sir William Chambers; and its ſituation correſponds with that on the eaſt of the gardens. In the front are four pillars with Ionic capitals; and on the pediment is this dedication:

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΔΙ.
ΑΓΡΙΑΙ-ΙΑΔΙ.
ΟΡΕΣΤΙΑΔΙ.

"To the Ionian, rural, mountain-ranging Diana."

On the back within, is a central medallion, repreſenting in baſs-relief, HIPPOLYTUS offering a wreath of flowers to DIANA; and on two others united to this by a feſtoon, are the ſubſequent verſes from the Hippolytus of EURIPIDES, with the annexed elegant Engliſh verſion.

Σοι τονδε πλεκτον στεφανον εξ ακηρατου
Λειμωνος, Ω Δεσποινα, κοσμησας φερω.
Ενθ' ουδε ποιμην αξιοι φερβειν βοτα,
Ουδ' ηλθε πω σιδηρος· αλλ' ακηρατον
Μελισσα λειμων' εαρινος διερχεται·
Ηως δε ποταμιαισι κηπευει δροσοις.

To thee, bright Goddeſs, theſe fair flowers I bring,
A chaplet woven from th' untainted mead,
Thy cool ſequeſter'd haunt, where never yet
Shepherd approach'd; where the rude hind ne'er heav'd
Th' unhallow'd axe: nor voice nor ſound is heard,
Save the low murmuring of the vernal bee.
The day-ſpring from above the dew diſtils
Genial and mild, from the pure ſtream exhal'd,
On every fragrant herb, and favourite flower.

Hurried on by the ſplendour of more capital objects, we forget to notice another

other caſt in bronze of the ROMAN WRESTLERS, by BENZI. It ſtands on the right a little before we approach the temple, and well deſerves attention as a juſt repreſentation of the antique.

A ſhort way beyond the temple we enjoy many brilliant ſcenes in the park; and turning round over the charming lawn before the ſouth front of the Palace, finiſh the tour of the gardens with impreſſions of pleaſure gradually raiſed to the higheſt, and permanently fixed by the ſplendour of the concluding ſcenery.

The interſecting walks generally retire from the ſight, but are never wanting for neceſſary communication: they conduct to the principal ſubordinate ſcenes; they occupy the happieſt ſpaces. By following their direction we are ſure of meeting with ſome object in our progreſs to compenſate for the toil; ſome beauty is developed which would otherwiſe be loſt; or ſcenes are thrown into perſpective, or heightened by contraſt, in a manner different from what we obſerved before.

The occaſional recurrence alſo of the garden chair, the plain bench, or the circular ſeat round the trunk of ſome umbrageous tree, by preſenting opportunities for reſt, prevent the idea of laſſitude. Thus, in our journey through life, it is not always the actual uſe of the accommodations we poſſeſs, that adds to our comfort; it is the reflection that we may command them in the hour of need, and that we have it in our power to gratify the want as ſoon as it is felt. But theſe are not ſimply objects of ornament or convenience: they generally point out ſcenes which repoſe may contemplate with delight, and fancy combine into picture.

Here a thouſand beauties, originating from deſign, appear fortuitous to the eye. Though traverſing a garden where taſte has exhauſted its ſkill, we inceſſantly indulge the idea of being only contemplating the natural charms of the country, and tracing delights of rich variety and unlimited extent.

In this tour, indeed, we have omitted many

many circumſtances which in an inferior place would have claimed deſerved regard. Here littleneſs is abſorbed in grandeur, and prettineſs in magnificence. This marks the prevailing character; and ſhould it ever, in the minuteſt inſtance, be ſacrificed to its oppoſite, Blenheim will loſe that principal beauty—conſiſtency, though it may borrow the faireſt flowers from the garland of novelty. Of this there is no danger; while the ſame taſte that has ſo ably planned, ſo nobly preſides, *et longum ſit*, this place will not only maintain its acknowledged ſuperiority, but riſe ſtill higher in the ſcale of public eſtimation.

RIVER*.

THE River, which covers the whole extent of a ſpacious valley, bending in the happieſt ſtile, and affording the moſt profuſe variety of pictureſque features in the ſublime, the beautiful, and the tranquil, when viewed with its accompaniments, is indiſputably the moſt ſuperb piece of artificial water in this kingdom. It is chiefly ſupplied by the GLYME, which ſtill, in a great meaſure, retains its original direction, its channel being expanded rather than altered; ſo favourable has Nature been to the operations of art!

It enters the park in the vale which ſeparates Old from New Woodſtock, flowing under a belt of riſing planta-

* If the words river and lake are ſometimes applied to the ſame thing, it is hoped the reader will not impute this to ignorance or error: the water at Blenheim partakes of the nature of both; it is a RIVER, becauſe it has a progreſſive motion; it is alſo a LAKE, becauſe it ſpreads far beyond its original channel. Thus uniting the diſtinguiſhing beauties and characteriſtics of each, it riſes to the pre-eminence of ſublimity in kind.

tions,

tions, and iſſuing to light by a bridge of ſeven arches, the minuteneſs and multiplicity of which have been thought to derogate from grandeur, though the whole is well adapted to give the idea of continuity. In other views, a thick grove, and beautiful groups of Lombardy poplars, and other trees that love the ſtreams, by concealing the ſource promote the ſame deſirable effect. The banks at firſt are low: on one ſide they ſoon become bold and winding; on the other, they have little elevation, but are happily varied.

The river quickly ſpreading to a great expanſe, ſtretches towards QUEEN POOL*, where it forms a ſmall creek, chiefly loſt in trees; then taking a determined courſe, it ſeems to ſeek the oppoſite ſhore, in its progreſs flowing round Queen ELIZABETH'S ISLAND †, a moſt delightful ſpot, clothed with trees and ſhrubs of the utmoſt beauty and variety,

* So called from Philippa, Queen of Edward III.

† This is part of the ancient cauſeway leading to the royal palace.

which connect the groups on the banks; and ſoon becoming embayed on the left, it winds round to the grand bridge, narrowing as it advances to an adequate breadth.

From the bridge a moſt capital expanſe of water again catches the eye; an expanſe unrivalled by the fineſt Engliſh river *, unmixed with the ſea; and which, waſhing the remote banks, varies with their direction; makes a long diverſion up a vale that forms a right angle with its bed, and affords the repreſentation of a collateral ſtream; then rolling a ſeemingly enlarged volume, it winds round, and waſhes the foot of the declivity, on which part of the gardens lie; and on the other ſide it is bounded by a hill, feathered down with a noble wood to the water's edge, and frequently reflected on its ſurface.

* Brown, who ſuperintended the early improvements here, in his uſual conſequential manner, has been heard to boaſt, "That the Thames would never forgive him for what he had done at Blenheim." Had he lived to the preſent time, he would have been ſenſible how much his moſt finiſhed labours may be ſurpaſſed.

Preſerving one general unvarying direction for a conſiderable length, it gradually narrows; and viewed from the grand bridge appears land-locked and embayed. Several pleaſure veſſels of various conſtruction riding at anchor, ſwans ſailing in conſcious pride, and other aquatic fowl indigenous as well as exotic, exerciſing their native propenſities, unite to enliven the watery ſcene. When tranquil, the reflected and reverted images in the ſtream preſent a picture, which fancy contemplates with mild delight; when agitated with winds, its rippling boſom and wavy daſh are lively emblems of the ſea, to which it then bears ſome reſemblance.

At the point where it appears embayed, it paſſes under a light iron bridge, ſimple and unadorned, and characteriſtic of its deſtination; and making a pretty ſudden bend, it tumbles down a barrier of maſſy rocks, with a force equal to its copiouſneſs, and with a fall of eighteen feet. Above this caſcade are an hundred

and

and fifty acres of water: below it is a continuation of an hundred more.

Recovering its level, it flows with a ſerpentine ſweep through an expanded vale, embelliſhed with a few groups of the moſt flouriſhing young plantation; and at an agreeable diſtance ſtretches another face of the hill already mentioned as a boundary, covered with trees whoſe pendency and age render them at once pictureſque and venerable; but though in this reach the river admits an oval woody iſlet, its channel becomes now more contracted than before; and its ſtile partakes rather of the beautiful than the ſublime. Reaching the new bridge, a very elegant ſtructure, it inclines with the courſe of the vale, and touching near Bladon, makes a determined bend to the right. The banks on both ſides at this point are ſwelling lawn with little clumps connected by ſingle trees, diſpoſed without the leaſt ſhew of intention.

From hence the river takes a variety of

of charming turns, chiefly with a ſtrong inclination to the right, doubling as it were on itſelf, and circumſcribing the end of the hill which accompanies it the greateſt part of its courſe. In one place, a fine ſheet of water ſpreads before the eye, and invites progreſs by its apparent continuity; in another, the trees ſeem to embay it, and we advance a conſiderable way before we can detect the deception.

From the firſt determined ſweep near Bladon, a gravel walk on the left follows the direction of the river. This walk is bounded on one ſide by a belt of thick plantation; on the other, a few ſcattered trees range with the ſtream. Beyond the river we are charmed with all the diverſity of pleaſing ſcenery: a ſmall grove firſt preſents itſelf cloſe to the verge of the tide; a few irregular trees next ſucceed; ſometimes a clump planted at the termination of a reach, by advancing to the belt on the oppoſite ſhore, appears to landlock the ſtream; then again we are delighted with open

lawn

lawn and diverſified landſcape. At laſt, the river precipitates itſelf down a ſteep caſcade, and at the ſame inſtant falls into the EVENLODE, which gliding in an oppoſite direction through verdant meads, winds under the park to receive the tributary GLYME. The united rivers forming a woody iſland immediately after their junction, meander through a continuation of meads, and diſpenſe beauty and fertility as they flow.

The effect occaſioned by two rivers haſtening to meet each other, and then bending almoſt at right angles with their former courſe, is as pleaſing as it is ſingular and romantic. No aukward termination is here to be traced; no diſguſting diſplay of art to heighten the ſcene: taſte unfolds the beauties of Nature with a delicate touch, and Art is only the handmaid to her charms.

So many circumſtances lend their aid to embelliſh this ſpot and its vicinity, that we ſcruple not to pronounce it one of the moſt delightful in the precincts of Blenheim: but it retires from the view,

and

and its unobtruſive charms are therefore ſeldom ſeen. While ſcenes leſs captivating force attention by a bold diſplay, theſe, like modeſty, ſhun the public eye, and are only viſited by the diſcerning few. May we not add, ſuch is the fate of unaſſuming merit; its lovely qualities are only caſually noticed, and the impreſſion they make is often too evaneſcent to avail them.

To return—the water at Blenheim, as a very elegant writer * obſerves, "in "ſize, form, and ſtile, is equal to the "majeſty of the ſcene; and is deſigned "in the ſpirit, is executed with the li-"berality of the original donation, when "this reſidence of a mighty monarch "was beſtowed by a great people, as a "munificent reward on the hero who "had deſerved beſt of his country."

* Wheatley on Modern Gardening.

PARK.

PARK.

THE PARK, which under the auſpices of the preſent Duke has received every poſſible improvement,

Plann'd by his taſte, and planted by his hand,

is one continued galaxy of charming proſpects, and agreeably diverſified ſcenes. Its circumference is upwards of twelve miles; its area about two thouſand ſeven hundred acres, round which are the moſt enchanting rides, chiefly ſhaded towards the boundary with a deep belt of various trees, evergreens, and deciduous ſhrubs, whoſe mingled foliage exhibit the different gradations of tints from the moſt faint to the moſt obfuſcated green; while others of correſponding figure and growth on the park ſide, ſometimes range with the former, and ſometimes breaking into groups, with large interſtices between, relieve the tædium of continued uniformity, and open the moſt brilliant proſpects. Indeed the effects of poliſhed taſte and the ſublime in deſign

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are no where more perceptible than in the boundleſs views which at intervals preſent themſelves; the limits of the park being in general quite concealed; and the whole ſurrounding country, varied with hills, and vales, ſpires, towers, and villas, appearing as one wide extended landſcape. In the internal part new improvements are continually adopting, and new plantations riſing, wherever they can contribute to the beauty or the luxuriance of the ſcene.

—Hence the poor are cloth'd, the hungry fed,
Health to himſelf, and to his children bread
The labourer bears.————

The uſual RIDE round the park for occaſional viſitors includes a circumference of rather more than three miles, deſcribing a wide circle round the palace and gardens, which are caſually and advantageouſly ſeen through glades in the progreſs *, and exhibiting many magnifi-

* This RIDE has ever been conſidered as the firſt of natural charms that BLENHEIM ſupplies, and as the *coup d'œil* and compendium of all the reſt; and as it may be taken in a carriage or on horſeback, it is neither accompanied with fatigue or delay. It may be taken too in any weather.

cent

cent pictures over the park and country round.

Elyſian ſcenes! by noble SPENCER lov'd,
Whoſe taſte completes what Nature had approv'd.
By him, yon groves the ruſſet ſlopes adorn,
That catch the golden tinge of early morn;
By him, the bloſſom'd ſhrub, the blooming flower,
From blended ſweets reviving incenſe pour;
By him the cryſtal lake is taught to ſtray,
Where yielding vallies point a ready way;
By him the rough caſcade, with deafening roar,
To liquid elements deſcribes a ſhore;
While winds the whiten'd wave through flow'ry meads,
And ſilver ſwans diſport among the reeds.
Illuſtrious Name! to every virtue dear,
Whom all the good muſt love, the bad revere:
Unwarp'd by grandeur's ſoft, ſeductive lure,
And arm'd by reaſon, from her arts ſecure;
For once, from wild caprice, kind Fortune free,
Showers down her choiceſt gifts, unblam'd, on thee.

To enumerate every beauty conſpicuous in this tour would be to delineate all that is charming in natural objects; and in ſome inſtances would occaſion a repetition of circumſtances already remarked. A detail muſt not therefore be expected. Let it however be obſerved, that at Blenheim the *ferme ornée* is combined with the magnificent park *.

* The PHEASANTRY, ſituated on a riſing ground near the lower Caſcade, is one of the moſt ſuperb eſtabliſh-

ments

In one quarter, the eye is delighted with the ſight of waving corn, in another with green paddocks that invite the ſcythe: here a building dedicated to agricultural purpoſes, or raiſed for the accommodation of the neceſſary officers, juſt peeps through the deep ſhade of ſurrounding trees; there the team rattles down the ſlope abrupt. On one ſide appears a herd of deer, on another a flock of ſheep, and ſometimes animals native and foreign graze in ſocial peace. All is a picture of rural life in its moſt agreeable colours, in its happieſt avocations: it preſents cheerful activity, or tranquil repoſe—Arcadian ſcenes diveſted of fable, and real wealth without glitter.

Among the many captivating views which every ſpectator of taſte will recognize in his RIDE, thoſe from the HIGH LODGE and the OBELISK may

ments of the kind in this country. The variety and beauty of theſe birds preſent an object that cannot fail to pleaſe. But though ſome of the more curious kinds are kept here, they ſtock the park and the adjoining woods in prodigious numbers.

be particularized. The HIGH LODGE was once the reſidence of the witty, but immoral Wilmot Earl of Rocheſter, and the place where he died. Let thoſe, who have copied his profligacy, reflect on his remorſe, and reſolve to imitate his repentance! From hence the proſpect is not only one of the moſt extenſive, but alſo one of the moſt captivating in Great Britain: it includes, among a variety of other capital and pictureſque objects, a beautiful view of the Univerſity of OXFORD.

> OXONIA's ſanes, of every art the ſeat,
> Of every Muſe the lov'd, the bleſt retreat.
> O may fair Science in theſe precincts ſmile,
> And ſhed her luſtre o'er this happy iſle:
> To guard the laws, religion's flame maintain,
> Still may worth iſſue from her foſt'ring reign!

From the OBELISK or PILLAR, the Palace, the River, and the Gardens are ſeen in their beſt perſpective, and the idea of grandeur they excite will convert admiration into aſtoniſhment. Nor will the OBELISK itſelf paſs without obſervation: it is raiſed to the memory of the hero of modern times, before whoſe

whoſe tranſcendent ſervices the little merits of other warriors are loſt.

Immortal Chief! of Albion's iſle the pride,
By martial deeds to greateſt names ally'd:
Renown'd for valour, as for mercy lov'd,
The higheſt pitch of human bliſs you prov'd;
Gain'd the fair meed without the conſcious ſtain,
And wore the laurel, unalloy'd with pain.
Unlike thoſe peſts which fought for fame alone,
To ſlave a nation, or to mount a throne;
You drew the ſword, the injur'd to defend,
To aid the helpleſs, and the proud to bend.
Be this your fame!—nor could the favouring Nine
Grace with a praiſe, more noble, more divine.

The ſtatue of this great man, which crowns the column, is deſigned in a Roman dreſs: at his feet are two eagles: in the left hand is the general's baton; in the right, a figure of VICTORY elevated. On three ſides of the pedeſtal are inſcribed the Acts of the Britiſh Parliament in his favour, and the entail of his honours and eſtates on the deſcendants of his daughters, by which they centre in the preſent illuſtrious family: on the ſide facing Blenheim, his character is thus delineated, and his exploits recorded, as is ſuppoſed, by the maſterly pen of Lord Bolingbroke:

The Caſtle of BLENHEIM was founded by Queen ANNE,
In the fourth year of her Reign,
In the Year of the Chriſtian Æra
One Thouſand Seven Hundred and Five.
A Monument deſigned to perpetuate the Memory of the
Signal Victory
Obtained over the *French* and *Bavarians*,
Near the Village of BLENHEIM,
On the Banks of the *Danube*,
By JOHN Duke of MARLBOROUGH,
The Hero not only of his Nation, but of his Age;
Whoſe Glory was equal in the Council and in the Field;
Who by Wiſdom, Juſtice, Candour, and Addreſs,
Reconciled various, and even oppoſite Intereſts;
acquired an Influence
Which no Rank, no Authority, can give,
Nor any Force, but that of ſuperior Virtue:
Became the fixed, important Centre,
Which united, in one common Cauſe,
The principal States of EUROPE;
Who, by military Knowledge, and irreſiſtible Valour,
In a long Series of uninterrupted Triumphs,
Broke the Power of FRANCE,
When raiſed the higheſt, when exerted the moſt:
Reſcued the EMPIRE from Deſolation;
Aſſerted, and confirmed the Liberties of EUROPE.

" PHILIP, a Grandſon of the Houſe of
" FRANCE, united to the Intereſt, directed
" by the Policy, ſupported by the Arms of
" that Crown, was placed on the Throne of
" Spain. King WILLIAM III. beheld this
" formida-

" formidable Union of two Great, and once
" Rival Monarchies. At the end of a Life
" ſpent in defending the Liberties of EU-
" ROPE, He ſaw them in their greateſt
" Danger. He provided for their ſecurity in
" the moſt effectual manner. He took the
" Duke of Marlborough into his Service.

" Ambaſſador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
" To the States General of the United Provinces,

" The Duke contracted ſeveral Alliances,
" before the Death of King William. He
" confirmed and improved Theſe, He con-
" tracted others, after the Acceſſion of Queen
" ANNE; and re-united the Confederacy,
" which had been diſſolved at the End of
" a former War, in a ſtricter and firmer
" League.

" Captain General and Commander in Chief
" Of the Forces of Great Britain,

" The Duke led to the Field the Army of
" the Allies. He took with ſurpriſing rapi-
" dity VENLO, RUREMONDE, STE-
" VENSWAERT, LIEGE. He extended
" and ſecured the Frontiers of the Dutch.
" The Enemies, whom he found inſulting at
" the Gates of NIMEGHEN, were driven

" to ſeek for ſhelter behind their Lines. He
" forced BONNE, HUY, LIMBOURG,
" in another Campaign. He opened the
" Communication of the RHINE, as well
" as the MAES. He added all the Country
" between theſe Rivers to his former Con-
" queſts.

" The Arms of FRANCE, favoured by
" the Defection of the Elector of BAVA-
" RIA, had penetrated into the Heart of
" the EMPIRE. This mighty Body lay ex-
" poſed to immediate ruin. In that memo-
" rable Criſis, the Duke of MARLBO-
" ROUGH led his Troops with unexam-
" pled Celerity, Secrecy, Order, from the
" OCEAN to the DANUBE. He ſaw, He
" attacked, nor ſtopped, but to conquer the
" Enemy. He forced the BAVARIANS,
" ſuſtained by the FRENCH, in their
" ſtrong Entrenchments at SCHELLEN-
" BERG. He paſſed the DANUBE. A
" ſecond Royal Army, compoſed of the beſt
" Troops of FRANCE, was ſent to rein-
" force the firſt. That of the Confederates
" was divided. With one part of it the Siege
" of INGOLDSTADT was carried on:
" with the other, the Duke gave Battle to
" the united Strength of FRANCE and BA-
" VARIA.

" VARIA. On the ſecond day of Auguſt,
" one thouſand ſeven hundred and four, He
" gained a more glorious Victory than the
" Hiſtories of any Age can boaſt. The heaps
" of ſlain were dreadful Proofs of his Va-
" lour: A Marſhall of FRANCE, whole
" Legions of FRENCH, his Priſoners, pro-
" claimed his Mercy. BAVARIA was ſub-
" dued. RATISBON, AUSBOURG, ULM,
" MEMINGHEN, all the Uſurpations of
" the Enemy were reſtored. From the DA-
" NUBE the Duke turned his victorious
" Arms towards the RHINE and the
" MOSELLE. LANDAU, TREVES,
" TRAERBACH were taken. In the
" Courſe of one Campaign the very Na-
" ture of the War was changed. The In-
" vaders of other States were reduced to de-
" fend their own. The Frontier of FRANCE
" was expoſed in its weakeſt Part to the Ef-
" forts of the Allies.

" That He might improve this Advan-
" tage, that He might puſh the Sum of
" Things to a ſpeedy Deciſion, the Duke of
" MARLBOROUGH led his Troops early
" in the following Year once more to the
" MOSELLE. They whom He had ſaved

" a few Months before, neglected to ſecond
" him now. They who might have been His
" Companions in Conqueſt, refuſed to join
" him. When He ſaw the generous Deſigns
" He had formed fruſtrated by private In-
" tereſt, by Pique, by Jealouſy, He returned
" with Speed to the MAES. He returned,
" and Fortune and Victory returned with
" Him. LIEGE was relieved: HUY re-
" taken. The FRENCH, who had preſſed
" the Army of the STATES GENERAL
" with ſuperior Numbers, retired behind In-
" trenchments which they deemed impreg-
" nable. The Duke forced theſe Intrench-
" ments, with inconſiderable Loſs, on the ſe-
" venth Day of July, 1705. He defeated a
" great Part of the Army which defended
" them. The reſt eſcaped by a precipitate
" Retreat. If Advantages proportionable to
" this Succeſs were not immediately obtain-
" ed, let the Failure be aſcribed to that
" Misfortune which attends moſt Confedera-
" cies, a Diviſion of Opinions where one
" alone ſhould judge, a Diviſion of Powers
" where one alone ſhould command. The
" Diſappointment itſelf did Honour to the
" Duke. It became the Wonder of Man-
" kind,

" kind, how he could do ſo much under
" thoſe Reſtraints which had hindered him
" from doing more.

" Powers more abſolute were given him
" afterwards. The Encreaſe of his Powers
" multiplied his Victories. At the opening
" of the next Campaign, when all his Army
" was not yet aſſembled, when it was hardly
" known that he had taken the Field, the
" Noiſe of his Triumphs was heard over
" EUROPE. On the twelfth day of May,
" one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix, he
" attacked the French at RAMELLIES.
" In the Space of two Hours their whole
" Army was put to Flight. The Vigour and
" Conduct with which he improved the Suc-
" ceſs were equal to thoſe with which he gained
" it. LOUVAIN, BRUSSELS, MALINES,
" LIERE, GHENT, OUDENARDE,
" ANTWERP, DAMME, BRUGES,
" COURTRAY ſurrendered. OSTEND,
" MENIN, DENDERMOND, AETH,
" were taken. BRABANT and FLAN-
" DERS were recovered. Places which had
" reſiſted the greateſt Generals for Months,
" for Years; Provinces diſputed for Ages,
" were the Conqueſts of a Summer.

" Nor was the Duke content to triumph
" alone.

" alone. Solicitous for the general Intereſt,
" his Care extended to the remoteſt Scenes
" of the War. He choſe to leſſen his own
" Army, that he might enable the Leaders
" of other Armies to conquer. To this muſt
" be aſcribed, that TURIN was relieved, the
" Duke of Savoy reinſtated, the FRENCH
" driven with Confuſion out of ITALY.

" Theſe Victories gave the Confederates
" an Opportunity of carrying the War on
" every ſide into the Dominions of FRANCE.
" But ſhe continued to enjoy a Kind of peace-
" ful Neutrality in GERMANY. From
" ITALY, ſhe was once alarmed, and had
" no more to fear. The entire Reduction
" of this Power, whoſe Ambition had cauſed,
" whoſe Strength ſupported the War, ſeemed
" reſerved to him alone, who had ſo trium-
" phantly begun the glorious Work.

" The Barrier of FRANCE on the Side
" of the LOW COUNTRIES, had been
" forming for more than half a Century.
" What Art, Power, Expence could do, had
" been done, to render it impenetrable. Yet
" here ſhe was moſt expoſed: for here the
" Duke of MARLBOROUGH threatened
" to attack her.

" To cover what they had gained by Sur-

" priſe,

" priſe, or had been yielded to them by
" Treachery, the FRENCH marched to the
" Banks of the SCHELDE. At their Head
" were the Princes of the Blood, and their
" moſt fortunate General the Duke of VEN-
" DOME. Thus commanded, thus poſted,
" they hoped to check the Victor in his
" Courſe. Vain were their Hopes. The
" Duke of MARLBOROUGH paſſed the
" River in their Sight. He defeated their
" whole Army. The Approach of Night
" concealed, the Proximity of GHENT fa-
" voured their Flight. They neglected no-
" thing to repair their Loſs, to defend their
" Frontier. New Generals, new Armies ap-
" peared in the NETHERLANDS. All
" contributed to enhance the Glory, none
" were able to retard the Progreſs of the
" Confederate Armies.

" LISLE, the Bulwark of this Barrier,
" was beſieged. A numerous Garriſon, and
" a Marſhal of FRANCE defended the
" Place. Prince EUGENE of SAVOY
" commanded, the Duke of MARLBO-
" ROUGH covered and ſuſtained the Siege.
" The Rivers were ſeized, and the Communi-
" cation with HOLLAND interrupted. The
" Duke opened new Communications with

" great

" great Labour, and greater Art. Through " Countries over-run by the Enemy, the " neceſſary Convoys arrived in Safety. One " alone was attacked. The Troops which " attacked it were beat. The Defence of " LISLE was animated by Aſſurances of " Relief. The FRENCH aſſembled all their " Force. They marched towards the Town. " The Duke of MARLBOROUGH offered " them Battle, without ſuſpending the Siege. " They abandoned the Enterpriſe. They came " to ſave the Town : they were Spectators of " its Fall.

" From this Conqueſt the Duke haſtened " to others.

" The Poſts taken by the Enemy on the " SCHELDE were ſurpriſed. That River " was paſſed the ſecond Time, and notwith- " ſtanding the great Preparations made to " prevent it, without Oppoſition. BRUS- " SELS, beſieged by the Elector of BAVA- " RIA, was relieved. GHENT ſurrendered " to the Duke in the Middle of a Winter " remarkably ſevere. An Army, little infe- " rior to his own, marched out of the Place.

" As ſoon as the Seaſon of the Year per- " mitted him to open another Campaign, " the Duke beſieged and took TOURNAY.

" He

" He inveſted MONS. Near this City, the " FRENCH Army, covered by thick Woods, " defended by treble Entrenchments, waited " to moleſt, nor preſumed to offer Battle. " Even this was not attempted by them with " Impunity. On the laſt day of Auguſt, one " thouſand ſeven hundred and nine, the Duke " attacked them in their Camp. All was " employed, nothing availed againſt the Re- " ſolution of ſuch a General, againſt the " Fury of ſuch Troops. The Battle was " bloody: the Event deciſive. The Woods " were pierced: the Fortifications trampled " down. The Enemy fled. The Town was " taken.

" DOWAY, BETHUNE, AIRE, St. " VENANT, BOUCHAIN underwent the " ſame Fate in two ſucceeding Years. Their " vigorous Reſiſtance could not ſave them. " The Army of FRANCE durſt not at- " tempt to relieve them. It ſeemed pre- " ſerved to defend the Capital of the Mo- " narchy.

" The Proſpect of this extreme Diſtreſs " was neither diſtant nor dubious. The " FRENCH acknowledged their Conqueror, " and ſued for Peace.

Theſe are the Actions of the Duke of MARLBOROUGH,
Performed in the Compaſs of a few Years,
Sufficient to adorn the Annals of Ages.
The Admiration of other Nations
Will be conveyed to lateſt Poſterity,
In the Hiſtories even of the Enemies of BRITAIN.
The Senſe which the BRITISH Nation had
Of his tranſcendent Merit,
was expreſſed
In the moſt ſolemn, moſt effectual, moſt durable Manner.
The Acts of PARLIAMENT inſcribed on this Pillar,
Shall ſtand as long as the BRITISH Name and Language laſt,
Illuſtrious Monuments
Of MARLBOROUGH's Glory,
and
Of BRITAIN's Gratitude.

Rows of ſtately trees deſcribe a creſcent on the eaſt and weſt of this column; but ſoon converging behind to a moderate breadth, and breaking into groups and clumps of different forms and magnitudes, they form a charming viſta to an almoſt undetermined length. Through this viſta formerly lay the road conducting to the grand approach; a ſtraight reach of more than two miles, without much diverſity in the objects, and with too great formality to pleaſe.

It

It now takes a happier direction along the edge of the lake to QUEEN POOL, then enters a low bottom with noble ſteeps in diſtinct maſſes, the ſides of which are adorned with pendent groves and clumps of different growths; and ſlowly gaining the level, at laſt terminates in the parallel of the palace and pillar; reaching the ſame point with the undeviating viſta, which in its preſent application is a real embelliſhment.

The ancient Roman road, generally known by the appellation of AKEMAN STREET, croſſes the viſta from eaſt to weſt; and may be diſtinctly traced near the north lodge. Where the AKEMAN has been broken up, its materials appear to have been an immenſe congeſtion of rubble and ſtones, ſuch as the vicinity ſupplied. Its ridge in many places is ſtill entire, and exhibits a proof of the perſevering induſtry, the indefatigable pains, and the public ſpirit of the Roman coloniſts. At a ſmall diſtance beyond the park, and a little to the right of the AKEMAN, in the pariſh of STONES-

FIELD,

FIELD, a teſſellated pavement * was diſcovered in 1711, which was then generally ſuppoſed to be nothing more than the ſite of a Roman general's tent. In 1779, near the ſame ſpot, the areas of ſeveral other large apartments were found with curious teſſellations, and borders, at once admirable for beauty and device. Adjoining was a hypocauſt, and a bath, and other remains of Roman architecture in brick of the moſt durable texture. Theſe have been chiefly removed or demoliſhed; however, conſiderable maſſes of the pavements are preſerved by Thomas Walker of Henſington, Eſq. and correct drawings of the whole, by Lewington, of Woodſtock (who has ſaved copies), are in the poſſeſſion of the Antiquary Society.

But this park is ſtill more celebrated for its magnificent royal palace, commonly called the MANOR HOUSE, the favourite retreat of ſeveral kings of Eng-

* See Hearne, Pointer, Pitiſcus' Lexicon, and the 2d Vol. of the Supplement to Montfaucon's Antiquities, p. 39.

land

land at various periods, till the reign of Charles I. when the ſucceeding interval of civil diſſenſion and anarchy laid it almoſt wholly in ruins. It was not however wholly demoliſhed, till after the building of Blenheim *; when every trace of the ancient edifice was removed, and two ſycamore trees were planted to mark its ſite.

Where yon ſpread trees wave o'er the cryſtal ſtream,
And ſhew inverted by the ſolar beam;
There where the margin's daiſy mantled ſide
Shelves down to kiſs the congregated tide,
An ancient palace ſtood,—the lov'd retreat
Of Britain's Monarchs from the toils of ſtate;
Where, dropt the weight of diademic power,
The King, in private, ſpent the tranquil hour;
New ſchemes contriv'd, or ponder'd on the paſt,
Nor felt time ſlowly lag, nor fly too faſt.

On entering the park from Woodſtock, theſe preſent themſelves on a bold elevation beyond the river, at a ſmall diſ-

* In levelling the ſite of the old manor-houſe, 1723, a coffin was dug up, in which was found a gold ring, of about ten or twelve guineas value, on which were theſe words, "REMEMBER THE COVENANT."

LELAND's Coll. by Hearne.

From prints and drawings ſtill remaining, it appears that the palace of Woodſtock was a magnificent and extenſive ſtructure.

tance from the bridge: their growth is luxuriant; their foliage of the moſt vivid green; they ſpread their broad arms on every ſide, and ſeem to guard the ſpot with religious veneration. Though their appearance is cheerful, though the penſive has no ſhare in the picture; a philoſophic mind can hardly view them without impreſſions more ſtrong than the moſt ſplendid ruin could have excited. At the ſight of a ruin, it is natural to indulge reflections on paſt ſcenes, to recal images of ancient grandeur, and to connect what remains with what is loſt. Here we cannot connect, but we may create.—Fancy is at liberty to raiſe the pile, to faſhion its ornaments, and to adapt its appendages without a guide, and without control; and fancy will ever exceed realities.—We thus erect the viſionary palace;—we people it with the gay, the illuſtrious, and the good; we liſten to the voice of melody—we pourtray the ſprightly dance, the proud levee;—at once they vaniſh; and we wake to the recollection of the vanity of art, and

the

the ravages of time, which here ſhew their completeſt triumph. Of the regal dome, not a wreck remains; and where kings gave audience, and vaſſals knelt, the herds crop the velvet green*.

Campos ubi Troja fuit.

Oblivion broods upon the levell'd lawn,
And fly the tints by hiſtory's pencil drawn.

This place can boaſt a very remote antiquity. Hiſtory informs us, that King Ethelred, who began his reign in 866, held a parliament at Woodſtock Palace; and Lambard, in his Collection of Saxon Laws, recites ſeveral ſtatutes then and there enacted. His brother, the illuſtrious ALFRED, who mounted the throne in 872, not only occaſionally reſided at Woodſtock, but, according to a MS. in the Cottonian library, ſpent ſo much of the little ſpace here, in which he was diſengaged from his numerous wars, that he tranſlated *Boethius de Conſolatione Phi-*

* On levelling and improving the ground in the vicinity, in 1791, ſeveral natural and artificial curioſities were diſcovered—among the reſt ſome coins of the Roman Emperors.

loſophiæ; and about the ſame time he is ſuppoſed to have founded the Univerſity of Oxford.

Here ſacred ALFRED, victor of his foes,
Indulg'd a ſtudious, and a mild repoſe;
Undrew the veil that wrapp'd the moral page,
And ſooth'd by claſſic arts a barbarous age;
Bade ſcience bloom with renovated grace,
And claſp the Muſes in a cloſe embrace.

Camden, in his Britannia, ſays that King Ethelred, father of Edward the Confeſſor, "Apud Woodſtock olim ordinum conventum habuit, et leges tulit;" that is, held a convention of the ſtates at Woodſtock, and paſſed laws. And from the cenſual roll, or ſurvey made in the 18th year of William the Conqueror, commonly called Doomſday Book, it appears that Woodſtock was then a borough, and that the demeſnes were afforeſted. Rous, the hiſtorian, tells us, that this was the firſt park in England: in point of natural beauty and elegant embelliſhment, it ſtill maintains priority! Dugdale ſeems to be of Rous's opinion; and William of Malmeſbury, and others, inform, that King Henry I. furniſhed it with

with foreign wild beaſts, which he procured from other princes, or bought up at a great expence. Certain it is, that this monarch at leaſt beautified the palace, and ſurrounded the park with a wall, which in many places ſtill remains: whether he built them from the ground, is by no means ſo clear *.

At the mention of Woodſtock, the name of Henry II. naturally occurs: for who has not heard of HENRY and ROSAMOND! This celebrated beauty was daughter of Walter Lord Clifford. At the early age of fifteen ſhe poſſeſſed ſufficient charms to captivate a warrior king, who ſeduced her from her friends, and contrived a bower for her reception, and a labyrinth by which her romantic retreat might communicate with the palace, and prevent any ſurpriſal from the vindictive jealouſy of his Queen. This precaution, however, is well known

* Not only the park, but the town of Woodſtock was made by Henry I. And indeed the town ſoon flouriſhed on account of the famous park.—LELAND's Collect.

to have proved ineffectual; and the lovely frail one at length fell a victim to the reſentment of the injured and the implacable Eleanor.

Ill-fated Fair! by HENRY led aſtray,
And taught to tread Seduction's thorny way;
Lur'd from parental arms, ere Prudence' call
Fixt Virtue's wiſh, or pictur'd Vice's fall;
Immur'd by Love in ſolitary bowers,
And doom'd to wither like the deſert flowers!

The manner of her diſcovery, and the kind of death ſhe ſuffered, are variouſly related, and much diſputed; and authentic hiſtory does not furniſh us with a clue to unravel them. Roſamond was buried in the choir of Godſtow nunnery, near Oxford, where a magnificent tomb was erected to her memory, * ſurrounded with tapers continually burning; till the beginning of King Richard's reign, when Hugh Biſhop of Lincoln, in his primary viſitation, came to Godſtow; and being offended at the extra-

* See notices of Roſamond's Tomb in the Gentleman's Magazine for Nov. 1791, p. 985; and of the foundation of Godſtow, in the ſame work for Auguſt 1787, p. 676.

ordinary

ordinary veneration he ſaw paid to a woman of her unfortunate deſcription, burſt into a fit of zeal, and ordered her remains to be removed, and depoſited in a leſs ſacred place. His injunction was complied with; and the nuns interred her in their chapter-houſe, covering her grave with a flat ſtone, on which was inſcribed no more than TOMBA ROSAMUNDI. What is now ſhewn for Roſamond's tomb, and ſome miſerable verſes recorded as her epitaph, are only inventions to amuſe the credulous, and baits for the ignorant: at the diſſolution of the monaſtery more important objects were obliterated, more ſingular circumſtances conſigned to oblivion.

Curioſity will be eager to be gratified with an account of her bower, her labyrinth, and her bath; circumſtances ſo univerſally known by report, and ſo intimately connected with the ſcenes deſcribed.—Of the bower, there is neither authentic hiſtory or drawing extant *—

of

* In Antony à Wood's Study, W. 276, there is, however,

of the labyrinth ſome traces of the foundation were diſcovered, and various utenſils, coins, and antiquities dug up, and preſented to Lady Diana Spencer by the workmen, when the ground was levelling by order of the firſt Duke of Marlborough. The ſpring that muſt have ſupplied her bath, ſtill remains, and retains her name; and is truly

"Health to the ſick, and ſolace to the ſwain."

It is ſituated in a ſmall dell in the ſide of the hill, a little to the weſtward of the grand bridge, and a few paces from the edge of the lake. It guſhes from an artificial aperture in the ſtones which line the cavity on the north to a conſiderable elevation, with a fall of nearly two feet, and a copiouſneſs and equability in every ſeaſon, that few ſprings exceed. Scarcely has it ſmoothed its ruffled

ever, a deſcription of Roſamond's bower, and Woodſtock park, ſuppoſed to be written by Mr. Ambrey.

For ſome notices relative to the antiquities of Woodſtock, the author of this deſcription confeſſes himſelf indebted to the reſearches of the learned and inquiſitive Mr. Price, Keeper of the Bodleian Library.

wave

wave before it is received into a capacious bath, about five feet deep, and twenty ſquare, lined at the bottom and on the ſides with freeſtone, and fenced with iron paliſades. The water of the bath is ſo pellucid and tranquil, that it reflects objects like a mirror; and for this purpoſe poets and lovers have aſſigned it to beauty, which ſeems to be indigenous here.

The facing over the fall is formed of a duſky coloured ſtone; the layers terminate abruptly on the ſides with the reſemblance of a ruin; and the whole has the air of antiquity. To increaſe this appearance, it bears many marks of the univerſal paſſion—the love of fame. This has prompted numbers to carve the initials of their names, and the year of the exploit, with characteriſtic rudeneſs, and with a ſeeming zeal for their preſervation. In one part we ſee names which now, perhaps, have no other memorial; in another, recent efforts to impreſs a remembrance by obliterating what former engravers have left as monuments of their

their exiſtence. Thus it is in life! in the moſt important tranſactions, in the greateſt performances.

In a ſolitude like this, where the ſubject and the ſcene are apt to inſpire penſive thoughts, ſuch traces are not unpleaſing, they tend to promote one general effect, to which every circumſtance here contributes—the love of contemplation. The hawthorn, mixed with woodbines and other ſhrubs, overhangs the ſpring, and forms a deep irregular ſhade; the gadding ivy and its congenerous plants claſp the ſtones that line the precipice, and fill up the fiſſures and interſtices with their roots. Behind riſes a grove, which is rapidly thickening its gloom, and aſſiſting to render the ſpot more ſequeſtered. The birds carol around; the nightingale, perhaps, pours forth her plaintive notes; and the daſhing of the water unites with the reverberations of the neighbouring echo to cheriſh a ſoothing melancholy. When this mood has been indulged till relief becomes deſirable, we may turn to the palace. The aſpect on this hand

is

is more cheerful and open. The ſombre, however, ſtill prevails, particularly at even; it is inſeparable from the ſeaſon and the ſpot. The following inſcription was penned under its influence, on a report that an urn was intended to be erected over the ſpring; if the verſe ſhould be neglected, let the moral be remembered!

INSCRIPTION.

Ye Fair! who tread in Pleaſure's mazy Round,
Where many a Snare, and many a Gulph is found;
For once reflect! with penſive Step draw nigh,
And let this Moral fix Attention's eye:
" Birth, Titles, Fortune,—all that Fate can give,
" Or the moſt favour'd of your Sex receive;
" Youth's blooming Grace, ev'n Roſamonda's charms,
" All that delights, or captivates and warms,
" Weigh'd in the Scale 'gainſt Virtue, are but vain—
" Link'd with fair Virtue, deathleſs Wreaths obtain;
" While Vice lives only in the Roll of Fame,
" To wake your Pity, or to warn from Shame!"

At Woodſtock Palace, Henry II. received the homage of Malcolm King of Scotland, and Rice Prince of Wales, in 1164; and likewiſe conferred the honour of knighthood on Jeffery ſurnamed Plantagenet, his ſecond ſon by the fair Roſamond.

mond. The nuptials of the Lady Ermengard, daughter of Richard Viſcount Beaumont, couſin to Henry, with WILLIAM King of Scotland, were alſo celebrated here with the utmoſt magnificence for four ſucceſſive days.

EDMUND, the ſecond ſon of Edward I. was born at this place, from thence called Edmund of Woodſtock; as well as EDWARD, eldeſt ſon of Edward III. commonly known by the appellation of the Black Prince, whoſe early valour and brilliant exploits, joined to the moſt poliſhed and conciliating manners, endear his memory to every lover of his country. This gallant prince, who died at the age of 46, is ſaid once to have reſided at the manſion anciently called PRINCE'S PLACE, now Dr. Mavor's academy.

Illuſtrious EDWARD! on thy natal hour,
With partial aſpects ſhone each heavenly pow'r
PEACE from her olive throne triumphant ſung,
And fierce BELLONA many a Pæan rung;
The gentle Arts with approbation ſmil'd,
And War's wild offſpring hail'd their favourite child.
O! fitted, or to ſhine in martial pride,
When hoſtile legions preſs on every ſide;

Or

Or give to Science all her native charms,
And conquer MINDS by Reaſon's nobler arms!
Fain would the Muſe a laſting wreath entwine,
To deck with vivid bloom thy brow divine:
Fain would ſhe ſing of POICTIERS' tented field,
And with the Lily grace thy ſable ſhield;
But NATURE's charms recal her wild career,
And fix her, ardent, to a meeter ſphere!

Woodſtock is likewiſe the birth-place of THOMAS, the ſixth ſon of Edward III. ſurnamed in hiſtory from the ſite of his nativity.

To enumerate all the remarkable incidents relative to Woodſtock, would be to compoſe many volumes *.

CHAUCER, the father of Engliſh poetry, ſpent ſome of his happieſt hours at this place; and if we make allowance for the ruſt of age, and the obſolete modes of diction that now obſcure his works, no one has ever equalled him in the various walks of poetry he adopted. Chaucer's houſe was ſituated at the right angle of the area before the triumphal

* John Haſtings, Earl of Pembroke, buried in Chriſt-Church Hoſpital, was ſlain at a Chriſtmas feſtivity in Woodſtock park, 1389, in the reign of Richard II.
PENNANT's London.

gate

gate which has been previouſly mentioned: the ſite is at preſent occupied by Mr. Prior; and though few remains of antiquity are now to be traced, the traveller of taſte never fails to eye the ſpot with a fond enthuſiaſm: he venerates the reſidence of original genius, and blames that ſpirit of improvement which has obliterated veſtiges, that ought to have been deemed ſacred by every Briton. Several writers of reputation mention a huge folio of his works in MS. chained to a reading deſk in his houſe, and which is ſaid to have been extant in the beginning of the preſent century, or the end of the laſt: that it once exiſted we have no doubt; but the preciſe time when it diſappeared, and what has become of it, are totally unknown.

AKENSIDE's inſcription for a ſtatue of the ancient bard, though his memory does not ſtand in need of ſuch frail memorials, nor is likely to obtain them, will not be improperly ſubjoined, nor appear inapplicable to the purpoſe for which it was intended.

Such was old CHAUCER, ſuch the placid mien
Of him who firſt with harmony inform'd
The language of our Fathers. Here he dwelt
For many a cheerful day. Theſe ancient walls
Have often heard him while his legends blithe
He ſang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each eſtate and age
The faſhions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand pourtraying. Tho' perchance
From BLENHEIM's towers, O ſtranger! thou art come
Glowing with CHURCHILL's trophies, yet in vain
Doſt thou applaud them, if thy breaſt be cold
To him this other hero, who in times
Dark and untaught began with charming verſe
To tame the rudeneſs of his native land.

With regard to the former celebrity of this place we may add, that the Princeſs ELIZABETH * was confined at Woodſtock by her cruel ſiſter Queen Mary; and her life was once in the moſt imminent danger, from a fire that broke out under the room where ſhe ſlept: but whether this fire was kindled intentionally, or merely through acci-

* Yet cannot birth, or fortune's powerful claim,
Beauty's fair form, or virtue's heavenly flame,
From life's fell cares their lov'd poſſeſſors free,
Elſe, why, ELIZA, frown'd the Fates on thee?
Why dropp'd the tear, as from the lattice ſeen,
The rural maiden, ſinging, croſs'd the green?
But that you felt the crime of being great,
And grac'd a priſon, ere you rul'd a ſtate!

dent,

dent, remains among the number of undeveloped myſteries with which the path of antiquity is ſtrewed. While here, ſhe is reported to have ſhed tears on ſeeing a milk-maid, ſinging, paſs before the window of her priſon, and to have expreſſed a wiſh that ſhe had been born to a ſituation as humble and as happy; a circumſtance on which the elegant and plaintive Shenſtone has beautifully enlarged.

Hark to yonder milk-maid ſinging,
Cheerly o'er the brimming pail;
Cowſlips all around her ſpringing,
Sweetly paint the golden vale.

Never yet did courtly maiden
Move ſo ſprightly, look ſo fair,
Never breaſt with jewels laden
Pour a ſong ſo void of care.

Would indulgent Heaven had granted
Me ſome rural damſel's part!
All the empire I had wanted
Then, had been my ſhepherd's heart.

The following verſes were written with charcoal on the window-ſhutter of the room where ſhe was confined. They are the compoſition of a great Queen, and

and derive their chief merit from this peculiarity.

Oh Fortune! how thy reſtleſſe wavering ſtate
Hath fraught with cares my troubled witt,
Witneſs this preſent priſonn whither Fate
Could bear me, and the joys I quit.
Thou cauſedſt the guiltie to be loſed
From bandes wherein are innocents incloſed;
Cauſing the guiltles to be ſtraites reſerved,
And freeing thoſe that death well deſerved;
But by her malice can be nothing wroughte;
So God ſend to my foes all they have thoughte.

ELIZABETHE PRISONER.

Anno Dom. 1555.

During the time of the civil wars, the Palace, as has been previouſly mentioned, ſuffered irreparable damage, chiefly by the mercenary and rapacious diſpoſition of the uſurper and his dependents, by whom part of the very materials were expoſed to ſale in 1653. The commiſſioners who aſſembled here in 1649, by order of the Rump Parliament, to ſurvey the royal property, and had taken up their reſidence in the king's apartments, were terribly alarmed by ſuppoſed ſpirits, which inceſſantly diſturbed their reſt during their ſtay:

but the real actor in this farce was one Joe Collins, ſince called the merry devil of Woodſtock, though at that time dignified with the epithet of Juſt. This man, it ſeems, was a royaliſt, and anxious to impreſs the commiſſioners with an idea of ſupernatural agency againſt their proceedings; and perhaps their own conſciences aided the impoſture.

A circumſtance of this kind would have been deemed unworthy regard, had it not been to introduce a remark on the triumph of true philoſophy *, and the decline of ſuperſtition. A learned doctor, a profeſſor in the Univerſity, in the reign of Charles II. fills ſeveral pages of his book on Natural Hiſtory with a detail of the pranks of this imaginary demon, among other reveries as ridicu-

* Since the firſt publication of this work, we have had occaſion to lament in a neighbouring nation, that a *ſpurious* philoſophy, which when *real* enlightens and humanizes the heart, has evinced ſtronger prejudices and ſanctioned greater enormities than ever could be charged againſt ignorance and fanaticiſm. The deluſions of ignorance are either pitiable or laughable; but the pride of *falſe* philoſophy, that ſpurns at religion and morals, is execrable and tremendous.

lous,

lous, which at this period would diſgrace the belief of anility *. What a pleaſing revolution! Science is now no longer obſcured by barbarous hypotheſes, nor true religion ſullied, by faith in demons licenſed to range, and witches permitted to torment.

* Widdowes, who was then incumbent of Woodſtock, kept a Diary, in which the ſtory of the apparitions is related. This ridiculous work was publiſhed in 1660, and with it a ſhort ſurvey of Woodſtock, taken from ancient authors.

WOODSTOCK.

THE borough of WOODSTOCK is ſituated on an eminence, near the banks of the Glyme, and enjoys every local advantage that can contribute either to health or pleaſure.

Here WOODSTOCK, erſt amid the ſylvan ſcene *,
Lifts her high brow, and, happy, ſmiles ſerene:
WOODSTOCK, belov'd by DIAN's huntreſs train,
What time thoſe ſhades confeſs'd the goddeſs' reign.

It is governed by a mayor, aldermen, and common council; and returns two burgeſſes to ſerve in Parliament.

In 1794, it contained two hundred and ſeven houſes or ſeparate tenements, including the ſix alms-houſes, lately built and liberally endowed by the Ducheſs of Marlborough, for ſix poor widows; and, from an accurate account then taken, one thouſand two hundred and ninety-ſeven ſouls.

The hamlet of Henſington, lying

* It was formerly within the limits of WHICHWOOD Foreſt.

within

within the pariſh or chapelry of New Woodſtock, conſiſts of eight houſes and forty-eight inhabitants, excluſive of the ſix additional alms-houſes now erecting near the entrance of the borough from Oxford.

The following ſonnet was addreſſed to the Ducheſs of Marlborough, on the endowment of the firſt alms-houſes. Its inſertion here is leſs intended as a compliment to Her Grace, than as an example and incentive for others to do the ſame.

In deep affliction's rigid ſcience bred,
Bent by calamity's oppreſſive rod,
How many ſink the meek ſubmitted head,
Hopeleſs of help, ſave only from their God!
The widow weeps, the orphan droops unſeen,
While Fortune's fav'rites wear a callous mien.
Yet know, the ſelfiſh breaſt, that cannot feel,
In vain for pleaſure leans on wealth or ſhew;
Ne'er was the boſom ſtamp'd with tranſport's ſeal,
Untouch'd by *Charity's* ecſtatic glow.
'Tis this, O Marlbro', that will gild thy name,
Thy heart delight in retroſpective view,
Gain virtue's meed—give pure and laſting fame,
For want and widow'd age a refuge find in you.

The immunities and franchiſes conferred on this corporation, by the favour of

of our ancient ſovereigns, are very conſiderable: in particular, Queen Elizabeth was a great benefactor; and if it were not invidious to exhibit living characters to public view, Woodſtock might now boaſt of a patron, whoſe munificence eclipſes that of all the kings and queens that ever honoured it with their reſidence. The town-hall and the church will be laſting monuments of liberality in expence,—of utility in its application!

The inns furniſh the beſt entertainment and accommodation to travellers. Theſe are the BEAR, MARLBOROUGH ARMS, &c. The inhabitants manufacture ſteel, and gloves, leather waiſtcoats and breeches, to a very conſiderable extent; and in both branches, the peculiar excellence of their fabricks has gained them diſtinguiſhed pre-eminence. In one reſpect, they have left the fable of Midas no longer an object of wonder: at their touch, the old nails of a horſeſhoe are converted into articles of infinitely greater price, according to their weight,

weight, than the pureſt gold *. A chain made here, weighing only two ounces, was ſold in France for 170l. ſterling.

About thirty years ago, in pulling down an old building near the church, ſeveral pieces of ancient coin were found, and among them two of the Emperor VESPASIAN, with this inſcription round the head, in characters very legible and neat: VESPASIANUS ROM. IMP. AUG. On the reverſe, JUDÆA CAPTA. The Romans indubitably had ſeveral ſtations in this vicinity: Alecti Caſtra, or ALCHESTER on the Akeman, was leſs than ten miles diſtant; and the teſſellated pavement near Stonesfield is an unqueſtionable veſtige of that once potent na-

* As a well-wiſher to a place, in which I have ſpent ſome of thoſe years moſt valuable in the life of man, and which I have uniformly endeavoured to ſerve, I cannot help expreſſing an earneſt deſire to ſee ſome eaſy and practicable regulations adopted, which would increaſe the conſumption, and fix the juſt and deſerved credit of its two ſtaple manufactures. My ideas on this ſubject do not concern the public; and therefore I forbear to ſtate them: but it will give me pleaſure to find that, by calling the attention of individuals to this ſubject, ſo nearly connected with their intereſt, I have in any degree promoted the objects I have in view.

tion.

tion. But this is not intended as a work on antiquities—if it were, the field is open: yet who would prefer exploring the earth for urns, rusty coins, and half obliterated castrametations, to the contemplation of living art and blooming nature, arrayed in their gayest dress, and captivating with their brightest charms!

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